

Contestations Innovation and Change
A Case Study of a New Western Australian
Secondary School

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a case study of the policy contestations associated with the establishment of a new Western Australian government secondary school. State politicians and bureaucrats promoted the school, Ballajura Community College, as '*a school for the twenty-first century*'. The school opened in 1995 and incorporated the State's first middle school, representing a significant change to the hitherto existing secondary school structure. The thesis provides information on how agents associated with the establishment of a new school navigated the multiple policy agendas against shifting social and political changes. At the time of opening the school the Western Australian government was committed to expanding devolution in schools. This thesis examines how key aspects of the devolution agenda impacted on the planning and establishment of Ballajura Community College.

The research provides an 'insider's perspective' of Foundation Principal and utilises a combination of methods including social semiotics, critical discourse analysis and autobiography. Data collection included documentary evidence, interviews with senior policy makers and autobiographical data.

While educational research and theory suggests that there is an urgent need to envision new futures for schooling in the twenty-first century, this same research often simplifies the process and does not attend to the multiplicity of variables. This investigation concludes that the design, structure, curriculum development and operation of a new secondary school, in a highly centralised system, is intimately linked to the broader socio-political context and established traditions and practices.

This thesis extends the debate on research into school change. It demonstrates that the processes of innovation and change can be neither formulaic nor prescriptive. It raises questions relating to the methods, authority and effects of educational research and argues that educational research for the twenty-first century must broaden its scope to incorporate and legitimise the voice and authority of school leaders and teachers.

Key Words:

Australia, change, innovation, secondary school, policy, social semiotics, critical discourse analysis, autobiography

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DEDICATION

To my father James Lee, for instilling in me a love of learning and the belief that my education is important.

To my husband Flemming who has supported me totally in the pursuit of my dreams.

GLOSSARY

BCC - Ballajura Community College

EDWA - Education Department of Western Australia

WA - Western Australia

SSTUWA - State School Teachers Union of Western Australia

NBEET - National Board of Employment Education and Training

IRC - Industrial Relations Commission

FISP - Flexibility in Schools Project

NPQTL - National Project for the Quality of Teaching and Learning

NSN - National Schools Network

GLA - General Learning Area

EFTAs - Effective Teaching Areas

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PART ONE

Chapter One

Introduction, Rationale and Thesis Outline

1.1 Introduction

This thesis is a case study of the establishment of Ballajura Community College (BCC), a new Western Australian government secondary school. Key agents, including community representatives, architects and Education Department of Western Australia (hereafter EDWA) policy makers, and myself as Foundation Principal, collaborated on the design of the school with the express purpose of it being 'an innovative school for the twenty first century'. The school officially opened in 1995 and incorporated the State's¹ first Middle School within a standard secondary school. The practical realisation of the innovation centred on the implementation of the State's first middle school, an invigorated role of the community, merit selection of all staff and architectural orientations towards middle schooling and the community.

In the thesis I examine how agents associated with the establishment of BCC navigated the multiple policy agendas within a highly centralised system, against the backdrop of shifting social and political contexts. I situate policy processes within the broader social and political contexts in order to examine the intersection of evolving discourses of change and innovation. Discourse is seen as a critical index of sociocultural reproduction and change (Fairclough, 1995 :2). The material realisations of discourses are understood in this thesis, as texts. Texts, whether spoken or written, drawn or built, embody different ideologies and shifting sociocultural practices.

In analysing a range of contestations associated with the opening of a new school, I draw on the texts, including existing policy documents, architectural design briefs, newspaper articles, planning documents and interview data to demonstrate the

¹ I use the term 'State' to signify the State of Western Australia and the lower case 'state' to signify the larger-scale political and economic apparatus.

complexities of navigating the wide range of discourses associated with the policy processes that impacted at BCC. Notions of 'contestations' provide a theoretical and methodological bridge for exploring the social relations linked to political, educational and economic discourses surrounding change and innovation. In any period of change, new genres, new forms of representation and changes to the semiotic landscape reflect 'changes in social, cultural, economic and technological domains' (Kress, 1997a :18). These changes do not however, occur in uncontested terrain. Halliday (1978) proposed that social semiotics provides 'a dynamic and interactive view of discourse as arising between socially organized individuals, where contestation is part of any discourse' (Meinhof, 1994 :70). Contestations arise from processes associated with the restructuring of the 'orders of discourse' (Fairclough, 1992 :271), in contexts where competing interests and ideologies intersect. In focussing on contestations, I have taken Rizvi and Kemmis' view that:

(P)rocesses of contestation should not be thought to be unusual, and certainly not reprehensible. In fact contestation is a perfectly usual means through which ideas are developed and tested. In social life in general, different ideas, practices and forms of organisation all have their advocates, and the evolution of social forms takes place through a struggle between supporters of different positions.

(Rizvi and Kemmis in Bowe, Ball, & Gold, 1992 :22)

In the thesis I examine how changes in representations embody and reflect, and partly constitute, changes in the social, educational and political domains, within the specific policy contexts of Western Australia (hereafter WA). Many of the texts that form the data arose from the processes of policy 'in the making'; policies relating to changing employment practices, to the implementation of middle schooling, to new and innovative secondary school buildings and to new notions of community participation in schooling.

I utilise a combination of methodologies including social semiotics (Halliday & Hasan, 1985; Hodge & Kress, 1993; Kress, 1995b, 1997b, 1999), critical discourse

analysis (Fairclough, 1989, 1992, 1995) and autobiographical narrative (Graham, 1991) to retrospectively analyse a lived experience (Van Manen, 1990). The combination of these methods has enabled me to engage in a critical analysis of how dominant, residual and emerging policies intersected to influence change and innovation in the context of establishing a new secondary school. In framing the study in this way, I suggest that the emphasis on 'critical' allows for the exploration of the underlying ideological messages in texts and on how power was effected in different discursive spaces within the context of establishing a new school.

The focus in this study is not on finalised and complete policy texts, since formal policies relating to the proposed changes did not exist at the time of establishing BCC. Policy texts therefore, are considered in relation to a multitude of other texts that circulated within the historical and social context(s) of policy making at the time of establishing BCC. As such, I argue that policy texts have different meanings for different social groups and individual actors mediate and transform 'policy' from different social and ideological positions. In this sense, I am interested in the 'dialectic between [policy] texts and processes, linguistic form and social and semiotic process' (Hodge & Kress, 1993 : 159). In analytical chapters, the various texts are analysed in order to describe how micro-political policy processes were both constituted by, and constitutive of, the broader policies of the State.

The use of autobiographical data extends the methodology in order to provide a 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973, 1983) of the complex relationships which affect the realisation of educational change. Lindlof (1995) suggests that thick description requires that the 'researcher immerses [herself] in the sites of a culture's routine textual engagements and documents the process of the immersion' (p.52). In my position as Foundation Principal I was an active agent in the establishment of BCC. My immersion in the culture of the school and the broader educational context was not at the time as 'researcher'. The role of principal did however, provide me with the unique opportunity to witness and be part of the everyday practices of establishing a new school. At the same time, I was actively involved in the development of policy at the State level. I use this experience as part of the narrative data for this thesis.

The three data sources; a diverse range of documentary texts, interviews with policy makers and key agents associated with the establishment of the school, and my own autobiographical narrative provide a variety of texts that form the data for the thesis. Kress has suggested that texts are:

(T)he encoding of a past history, and of the realignment of the elements of that past history in response to the demands of a present social complex. History is an inevitable element of text: history of differing kinds and dimensions - the micro-history of an interaction now, itself formed out of the history of prior social/linguistic experience, which in its turn records the macro-history of a language and culture.

(Kress, 1989 :449)

The production and interpretation of texts is, therefore, integral to the ways in which we reproduce and change our social relationships and knowledge of the world in general (Bex, 1996; Kress, 1993). In my study, the texts, in all their variety, are the means for examining the links between State policies and local school change and innovation. They are the material realisations of the policy processes in action in that they result from the 'social relations and struggles out of which they were generated' (Fairclough, 1989 :24).

I will now turn my attention to a discussion of the research questions, the rationale, frame of reference and the links between my autobiographical narrative and change and innovation at BCC.

1.2 The Research Questions

I will argue in this thesis that four specific State policies directly impacted on change and innovation at BCC. These policies were newly introduced at BCC and represented significant changes from the hitherto existing EDWA practices and policies. More importantly, each of these policies defined the significant distinguishing features of BCC and therefore underpin the research questions. These policies relate to:

- 1) the introduction of middle schooling as a distinct phase;
- 2) the expansion of the role of the community in the design of the school;

- 3) changes to employment practices, and
- 4) changes to secondary school buildings.

The first change related to the introduction of middle schooling as a distinct phase of schooling in WA. For the Western Australian education bureaucracy, BCC was to be the first middle school, and the only government secondary school to enrol year seven students. The introduction of the State's first middle school raised a range of policy issues at the central and school levels. These policy issues related to what a middle school would look like, and how in fact the four 'essential circuits', the 'four message systems' (Ball, 1994a :1) of curriculum, assessment, pedagogy and organisation would be navigated within the new secondary school arrangement.

The second policy change at BCC was linked to an invigoration of the role of the community in the design and operation of the school. This policy was to have a significant influence on the establishment of the school because it not only placed parents and the community at the forefront of planning of the school, it also gave rise to new meanings associated with the role of the school within the community and the role of the community within the school. The notion of community was also very strongly linked to reworking pedagogical arrangements for teachers and students.

The third policy relating to implementation of new employment practices resulted in the introduction of school-based merit selection of all staff at BCC. Underscoring these initiatives were radical changes to the structure of employment, through the introduction of new legislation in WA; that is State-based employment legislation. For example, for the first time in WA, the principal and all staff were selected on merit and given limited tenure appointments. The principal and teachers were also required to submit to performance management as an essential condition of their appointments to the school.

The fourth policy that significantly influenced change and innovation at BCC was that relating to the building of secondary schools. For many years prior to the building of BCC, secondary schools were built to formula, with the central organisational feature being that of the faculty model; that is, secondary schools were organised around subject disciplines. School buildings reflected this arrangement with subject faculties being the major organisational impetus. The introduction of middle schooling at BCC was seen as

an opportunity to challenge many of the existing arrangements in order to explore new possibilities for secondary school buildings. Within this discourse of change was a strong commitment to 'student centred learning', 'community access', 'community participation' and 'community use'. The coupling of the discourse of 'community' with the building of 'new and innovative' facilities had major implications for the policy directions of the school.

I will argue that EDWA used BCC as a site for progressing the devolution agenda by coupling the four above-mentioned policies to discourses of change and innovation. I will demonstrate in later chapters that each policy gave rise to competing perspectives linked to different positions of power and that during the opening and early operational stages, a radical reshaping of educational policies came to the fore. I will also demonstrate how, within the particular context of establishing a new school, an 'ensemble of policies' (Ball, 1994a :22) intersected, and that individual agents associated with the opening of a new school mediated these policies from different interpretative positions. In order to understand the complex, socially situated interpretative processes of policy making, I draw on social semiotics and critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a framework for examining how policy processes are mediated and transformed by different actors. 'A social semiotic is a theory that sees culture itself being produced by intersecting code systems' (Schroder, 1994 :339). Policy making, in this view, is mediated and transformed in multiple ways because each agent brings their own set of individual and social meaning potential to the process. Specific mediations are also inflected by macrosocial factors including political contexts, which serve their own social and discursive functions. In other words, I do not see policy texts as monolithic single entities, but rather as multiple texts that arise from the process of 'policy in the making'. That is, I see the construction of policy involving a continual process of meaning making by various participants in a variety of social spaces. Policy texts are viewed as the material realisation of semiosis: they circulate in a variety of forms and in different situations: 'each situation and text a site where countless histories intersect' (Hodge & Kress, 1993 :158). The methodological approach takes into account this theoretical position. Texts and discursive and semiotic processes are therefore seen as technologies and indices of change and innovation.

There are three research questions. The first question is:

Given that the State created a space for innovation and change, how did existing and emerging policies influence the establishment of BCC?

This question serves to focus the study on the process of navigating the range of discourses arising from policies, both new and established, which impacted on change and innovation at the school. That is, I am interested in how the amalgam of 'dominant', 'residual' and 'emergent' (Eagleton, 1991 :47) discourses gave rise to struggles that either constrained or enabled possibilities for change and innovation at BCC. As a State school, BCC was clearly under the regulatory controls of the central bureaucracy. The first question is intended to draw attention to the social, political and economic factors that influenced policy and shaped innovation and change at BCC. This question also draws attention to the multi-dimensional nature of school change and recognises the necessity of seeing school change as a complex process involving the interplay between the 'ad hocery of the macro with the ad hocery of the micro' (Ball, 1994a :15).

The second research question recognises that change in schools is quintessentially about creating new meanings:

How were meanings of secondary schooling mediated, transformed and materialised by agents associated with the establishment of BCC?

This question is closely linked to the first, because in the thesis, I see policy making centrally linked to meaning making. The second question has two aspects. The first points to the fact that school change requires the reworking of naturalised meanings, that is, ways of being and ways of seeing: what Fairclough terms, 'ideological norms' (Fairclough, 1995 :39). Clearly, the process of establishing a 'new and innovative school' implies a reworking of meanings: meanings about curriculum, about school organisation, about relationships with students, teachers, Unions, the community and the central bureaucracy. These meanings are not constructed in the school context alone. More than ever, school change is linked to the wider social and political contexts (Altrichter & Elliott, 2000; Whitty, 1997a). The second aspect of this question therefore, deals with

how new meanings of schooling at BCC were connected to the wider process of social, educational and cultural change.

The third question relates more to the process of undertaking the research. It raises issues of 'voice' and 'authority' and forms of representation, and deals with my own meaning making in the course of establishing the school, and later, in researching the school. This question forces reflection on assumptions employed in the conduct of research, of objectivity and subjectivity and on the relationship between the 'particular and the general' (Eisner, 1997 :6) These issues strongly influenced my choice of authorial style(s), and led me to adopt a reflexive autobiographical methodology. The third research question is:

How can autobiographical accounts contribute to a better understanding of the processes of change and innovation in the context of establishing a new school?

A central theme of the study was to provide an account of school change and innovation that would resonate with practitioners - teachers and principals. I was concerned to connect with educators who were engaged in the 'living contradictions' (Whitehead, 1989) of school life, contending with multiple policy agendas and demands, and simultaneously navigating uncertainty and certainty. In this sense, I have both epistemological and political motivations. As Elbaz, (1991) notes, 'the term [voice] is always used against the background of a previous silence, and it is a political usage as well as an epistemological one' (p.10).

1.3 Rationale - The Objectives of this Study and Frame of Reference

Many school change experts suggest that change initiatives are most successful when they are 'bottom up' (Fullan, 1991; Murphy, 1993). My contention is that the process is far more complex than initiating change at the school level alone. I maintain that major school change is inextricably linked to the broader social, political and cultural contexts and cannot be viewed exclusively from the 'bottom up'. I will suggest that powerful forces exist both within and outside the school, and many of these are linked to broader

state imperatives, beyond the influence of teachers in classrooms. The main objective of this study is to investigate the policy contestations associated with change and innovation within the context of establishing a new secondary school. The specific frame of reference for my research is the initial six-month planning period and first two years of the school's operation.

Although I am neither a linguist, nor a social semiotician, I am interested in how meanings are fixed and settled, transported and transformed from one site to another in a variety of forms, and by different agents, in the processes of educational policy making. To make sense of the meanings in my data required a shift away from established methods used in many policy studies to a method that viewed 'texts' in a far broader way than simply spoken and written forms. Adopting a social semiotic approach as a central feature of my study provided such a method for analysing a wide range of signs and the transformations of these signs, not otherwise considered in policy analysis. Social semiotics, with its focus on multiple modes of representation, does not privilege language as the *only* means of articulate communication and representation (Kress, 1997b). To illustrate this point, that is, the importance of using social semiotics as an analytical tool, I provide an example below.

BCC was situated at the intersection of two main arterial roads bounded on one side by a large housing estate and on the other side by a large, light-industrial area. The school was unfenced and situated very close to the roads, houses and industrial area. As a 'text', the school buildings and the absence of fences carried multiple meanings. I am suggesting: a) the siting of the school was a deliberate (motivated) decision, and b) the siting of the school and the absence of fencing carried meanings that were centrally linked to other policy changes taking place within the State. I will argue that social semiotics provided the most effective means to analyse texts that combined multiple modes, such as architectural blueprints and buildings: an issue explored more thoroughly in later chapters.

The chosen combination of methodologies offers a new way of problematising policy 'in the making' in the unique context of a new secondary school; an area under-researched in the educational policy arena. I recognise that there was a range of possible theoretical positions or frames to describe and theorise the process of school change and

innovation at BCC. However, I selected the four policy areas because they exemplify significant differentiating features of BCC, compared with other secondary schools within WA.

I have used these four policy areas to exemplify difficulties associated with navigating school level change and innovation in the context of wider State level policy agendas. For example, in analysing data around changing work practices (Chapter seven), I discuss the tensions that emerged as a result of the incorporation of new State legislation into the educational domain. In Chapters six and eight, I also discuss the changing context of secondary schooling with respect to 'The Community'. In this way, I draw attention to the problems that schools confront when responding to State imperatives. I also examine the complex relationships between texts, in order to chart the equally complex relationships between different agents associated with the process of policy making. It is in this area that the study offers new ways of viewing policy process and change and innovation. Many policy studies have neglected to attend to the importance of the wider influences that impact on schools and school systems, and neglect issues of language and meaning (Maguire & Ball, 1994). I take this point up later, in my review of educational policy research, some of which singles out individual variables or policies; some of which provides formulaic 'how to' lists, and subsequently oversimplifies the processes of school change and innovation (Ball, 1994a).

In my revisiting the familiar site as 'researcher' I attempt to 'get inside' the policy process in order to examine the ways in which individual policy makers and actors associated with the establishment of the new school mediated and transformed State policies. By 'transformational process' I am referring to the way in which policy actors engaged in 'deleting, substituting, combining or reordering a syntagm or its elements' (Hodge & Kress, 1993 :17) in text production in the course of the policy process.

Individual actors come to the policy process with different motivations, different histories and different ideologies. These differences result in struggles and transformations, both of texts and in power relations. Social and cultural histories are inscribed in policy texts that in turn are inscribed in associated (new) texts. As Kress points out:

The forms and meanings of texts are determined by discourses - systems of meanings arising out of the organisation of social institutions - and by genres - formal conventional categories whose meanings and forms arise out of the meanings, forms and functions of the conventionalised occasions of social interactions. Clearly, both of these sources of the forms and meanings of texts are entirely social and cultural. Nor are discourses unrelated - social institutions tend to have their own particular occasions of interaction, and so it seems at times that when we are talking about genre we are talking about discourse, and talking about characteristics of discourse when we are discussing genre. Clearly too, certain discourses tend to have preferred relations with certain genres, and some genres are incompatible with certain discourses.

(Kress, 1985 :31)

I have drawn heavily on the ideas of Kress, (1985, 1994a, 1994b, 1995b, 1996), Hodge & Kress, (1993) and Kress & van Leeuwen, (1996) throughout the thesis. For example, Chapter eight shows the link between established building policy documents new curricular documents and architectural drawings. The discourses of change and innovation, for example, discourses of flexibility, discourses of economic rationalism, discourses of accountability, merged with established discourses and were transformed by the planners of the school, into new texts - design briefs and architectural drawings, new employment practices and new notions of curriculum and 'community participation'. These processes were not just about building a new school. They were about the material realisation of the process of policy making.

Viewing policy in this dynamic way meant that it was by no means a simple task to isolate the texts that were to form the focus of the analyses and the account. The volume and breadth of the materials spanned a wide range of domains² and every text 'told part of the story'. It was the complexity and richness of the data that motivated me to provide an alternative account of the process of enacting change and innovation in

² (Svendberg, 2000 :226) suggests 'A domain is understood as a sphere of power and control claimed by a social entity, where people talk, think and feel along similar paths. In order to construct its own identity and to make sense of the surroundings, each particular domain develops a particular sense giving discourse'.

establishing a new secondary school. My concern was to adopt a methodological and theoretical approach that did not result in the distillation of the data into a sanitised account that failed to address the complexities of navigating multiple policy agendas in the process of establishing a new school within a State education bureaucracy.

The study also attempts to answer critics, such as Levin and Riffel, who argue that schools should, and indeed must change if they are to continue to be influential in shaping society into the twenty-first century.

While acknowledging the(se) very real constraints, we also feel that school systems create some of their own difficulties. The ideas, structures and processes, which frame and shape their efforts, are essentially inward looking and limited. Social changes surrounding schools raise fundamental questions about the established purposes and organisation of schools, as well as the nature and processes of education.

(Levin & Riffel, 1997 :2)

While researchers such as Levin and Riffel (ibid.) suggest that external social and political systems are demanding that schools change, much of the data from this study suggested that external forces often serve as either obstructions to change, or 'glue' to cement existing structures into place. In attempting to interpret and apply educational reform literature to establishing the new school, it became evident that in many cases there were teasingly oversimplified accounts of how to implement change in schools (Newton & Tarrant, 1992) and an absence of a clear understanding of what the imagined futures for schools might be. My experience indicated that processes associated with the planning and adoption of an outward looking and broader vision for a new secondary school specifically designed for 'the twenty-first century' required the navigation of a range of competing ideologies and discourses. Overall, this thesis focuses on issues associated with the regulative power and controls exerted within and outside schools, and how these forces impacted on change initiatives, even when the initiative was one that was initiated and 'supported' by the State.

1.3.1 Professional Background In Innovation and Change In Education

In this section, I will briefly describe those parts of my professional biography that influenced my role as Foundation Principal at BCC. I will discuss my involvement in the development of a State-wide literacy professional development programme (*Stepping Out*) for secondary teachers, a professional experience that proved to be a pivotal period in shaping my role as Foundation Principal of BCC. In this section I also provide the first in a series of vignettes, which are included throughout the thesis. The vignettes are a way of contextualising the study in relation to my own agency as teacher/researcher and to bring to the attention of the reader, the complexities of working inside the policy process within the State of WA. I provide a further explanation of the use of vignettes in the later part of this chapter.

Leading Stepping Out

Before my appointment to school leadership positions, I undertook leadership roles of EDWA professional development and curriculum development projects. These positions provided the unique opportunity to research the context and the content of the lower secondary curriculum. One of the more demanding roles, Project Leader for *Stepping Out*, required that I research, design, trial and implement a State-wide literacy professional development programme for every secondary teacher in the geographically vast State of WA.

As project leader for *Stepping Out*, I visited secondary schools and classrooms all over the State of WA. It was during these visits that I took on the role of participant observer (Lindlof, 1995). I tracked students and teachers over time and shadowed their actions and interactions over days and weeks. I talked and listened to principals, (head-teachers), teachers, students, parents and District Superintendents. I watched and participated in lessons across the wide spectrum of the secondary school curriculum. I logged observations, collected work samples, took photographs, analysed text books and tasks and came to an in-depth understanding of the lower secondary curriculum, as well as the primary curriculum.

During the research phase of *Stepping Out*, I travelled the State of Western Australia extensively and visited schools in locations that ranged from remote Aboriginal communities in the North west of WA, bustling sea ports, wheat belt hamlets in the mid-

west and isolated timber towns in the far south of the State. One such experience I logged in detail, was a month-long visit to a number of remote Aboriginal communities in WA. It was through my visits to these remote communities that I came to a better appreciation of the diverse demands placed on secondary school students and teachers.

The experience described below in 'Vignette 1-1' illustrates the scope of my role as Project Leader for *Stepping Out*, and the strong influences this position played in the shaping of my future work as Foundation Principal of BCC. It also draws attention to my early concerns about the contradictions of secondary schools and the durability of the 'grammar' of secondary schooling (Tyack & Tobin, 1994). These earlier concerns later became central policy issues in the establishment of BCC. I also highlight my increasing awareness of the magnitude of the task that I had agreed to undertake in addressing curriculum change, and the social, political and cultural complexity of localised and systemic school reform.

Vignette 1-1

We flew into Broome, a large north-western township, after a flight of about three hours from Perth. This is the ultimate location of travel brochures: vast stretches of white sandy beaches, crystal-clear water, honeymoons and dreams. This is the location of flexible times and balmy breezes and holidays; and temperatures that never drop below 25C: the land of 'she'll be right mate'.

A smaller charter plane was waiting for us at the Broome airport, the young pilot checking the last of the equipment: dials, tyres, water cans and logbooks, for the second leg of the journey, a one-hour flight. I was there with a representative of the Australian Schools Council, to visit remote Aboriginal schools as part of the planning for the *Stepping Out* Project. We had just enough time to go to Broome town-site to buy some provisions to take to the teachers in remote

locations - boxes of fruit and fresh bread and milk. We settled into the back seats of the tiny twin engine aircraft and shortly taxied down the runway. The red dirt seemed to be attracted to the pristine whiteness of my linen skirt and above the roar of the engine we laughed at the prospect of arriving looking decidedly untidy.

The trip up to the northern most tip of WA took us over landscape so grand that it defied description. The vast alluvial river systems with sparkling billabongs were framed by the red landscape, dramatic coastline, endless sky and the colours; colours so varied and subtle, that they shouted out at you, grabbed you.

We circled over a tiny township, the corrugated iron roofs reflecting in the sunlight. A small group of tiny figures stood on the ground waving to us furiously and as we landed, we saw they were the students from the school; shiny-skinned young Aboriginal students, accompanied by their teachers and community members.

We were welcomed with great ceremony and helped back to the school by the students who appeared self-conscious by our interest in them. The heat was overwhelming although the principal said that the weather was cooler. There was an air of excitement tempered with apprehension, as is often the case when visiting a school as an 'outsider'. The Aboriginal murals on the walls caught our eye as we made our way to the staff room. We were introduced to all the staff, had tea and cold drinks, and spent some

time getting to know the teachers. The EDWA built the school in railway carriage style - long buildings with verandas and drink fountains. It was much the same as those metropolitan schools I had visited the previous week in and around Perth, except that the whirring of the air-conditioners signalled that we were above the 26th parallel (the criterion for air conditioning schools in WA). The central courtyard was grassed, rather than paved, the sprinklers apologetically issuing water. Most teachers had come from Perth, having recently completed their training and applied for a *Remote Aboriginal School*. This school was a 'preferred location' because of its coastal location and proximity to Broome, and so there was agreement that they were lucky. Some teachers had been there for several years and this was the third year for the principal.

Our negotiated agreement before going to the school was to visit and talk to teachers, observe the full range of secondary lessons, interview and observe students and track them through the curriculum over a number of days. We also hoped to visit community members and to talk to them as well. The schedule for lessons and interviews was mapped out, and we were keen to begin.

I was attached to the Year 8 group of students who were to start the day with mathematics, then science followed by home economics. I watched and listened: converting decimals to fractions, chemical and physical change, cooking a quiche. The language and style of the lessons were as if they were occurring

in Perth: the punctuation of activities, the textbooks and the discourses, the content and timetable all seemed familiar. Every teacher was dedicated to the task, committed to engaging the students and getting through the curriculum.

After three, forty-minute periods, the siren sounded and teachers and students emerged; teachers retreating to the cool and quiet staff room, students to the shaded, cool areas around the school. The pattern of lessons continued throughout the day, with students engaging in a wide range of subjects with different teachers every forty minutes, different texts, different tasks.

We spent the days as planned, watching, listening and talking to students and teachers. At lunchtime, the students went home to the community and a large number of them didn't return. In the afternoon, the lessons had noticeably fewer children, some as few as two or three, but nonetheless, the teachers continued with their planned lessons. The siren sounded the end to each period and students packed up and made their way to the next allotted subject.

In the evenings, the balmy breezes provided us with a welcome relief from the heat. We walked along the beach and visited some of the community members. They were fishing on the beach. Young children scarcely with their land legs were diving fearlessly into the water, sometimes emerging with a fish or a crab. The fires glowed along the beach and the evening meal of cooked turtle, rich meat with greenish fat, provided a celebratory end to the day.

We talked to the young people we had observed and talked to at school, about their hopes and aspirations. Many had not been away from the community and many were unsure about what their plans were.

We drove from this community to many others. At one similar school, the Aboriginal School Gardener was planting roses in a rose bed just inside the fenced schoolyard to celebrate our visit. The temperature was above 45 degrees and the yellow 'brickies sand' held no promise of sustenance for the new plants. In this same location, at the very same time, the events which unfolded were predictably the same as those at the schools we had visited before and presumably, those we would visit in the following weeks: country schools, metropolitan schools, remote communities, and rural communities.

(Larsen, Personal journal, July, 1992)

I worked for three years as Leader of the *Stepping Out* project, incorporating aspects of critical pedagogy (Giroux, 1988), critical literacy (Lankshear, 1997), curriculum analysis and school restructuring (Dimmock & O'Donoghue, 1997) as central parts to the project. In the process, I constantly struggled with the tensions relating to the imperatives around curriculum, pedagogy and subject demarcation. I also recognised the power of the secondary curriculum and organisation as differentiating and excluding instruments for many students (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Whitty, 1985). I came to realise that the issues associated with school change in secondary schools are complex and shrouded in social, historical and political ideologies, which policy makers, principals, teachers, parents and students interpret, and reinterpret through their individual contexts and subjectivities (Sarason, 1991, 1996).

My research for the *Stepping Out* project raised many questions. What makes the secondary curriculum and organisation so enduring? Why is it that if we talk about

science in secondary schools, there is universality about the way the lessons are conducted - the types of texts that are used, how students and teachers occupy space, the discourse, the tasks and the assessment? Why do schools and school systems find it so difficult to engage in change, despite a plethora of literature which suggests that the organisational structures of secondary schools and schooling are hegemonic, and fail to represent the needs of many students? Why, despite there being enormous pressure to reorganise in other ways, do secondary schools cling to an organisational structure which segments knowledge into small parcels by breaking the day into disjointed time slots and delivering metered doses in an 'age, stage, cage' model?

During my leadership of *Stepping Out* I was aware that much of the literature about school change, particularly that relating to secondary schools, focused on individual components of school change – curriculum implementation, teaching practices or assessment procedures (Levin & Riffel, 1997 :1). That same literature, which in some cases advanced this compartmentalised approach, was often openly disparaging of the efforts made by schools in responding to change at a fundamental level. Despite the volumes of literature about school change (Ball, 1987; Fullan, 1993; Hargreaves, 1994; Rudduck, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1992; Stoll & Fink, 1996), there is a good deal of evidence to suggest that school systems have remained relatively unchanged and unresponsive to the demands of a highly complex and changing society (Angus, 1997; Hargreaves, 1999; Rudduck, 1991).

As leader of *Stepping Out*, I struggled with the issues of school change. I felt the need to move from the position of an 'outside expert' to that of an insider (Todorov, 1984). When the Foundation Principal position for BCC was advertised I saw it as an opportunity to put into practice much of the knowledge that I had acquired in the role of external consultant. I felt that this was one way to understand the nuances of the practices and create a school in which teachers and students were able to experience a sense of empowerment and 'critical agency' (Giroux, 1988 :87) to adopt critical pedagogies (Giroux, 1988, 1989, 1992) and improve literacy and learning. Central to these imagined changes were new and innovative ways of fostering relationships with adolescent students and the community. These included the innovative use of space, the introduction of more flexible structures and curricula and the ongoing and explicit support for

students' literacy development, which would then in turn, sustain these endeavours.

At the same time as applying for the position of Foundation Principal of BCC, I applied for, and fortuitously won, a scholarship to study at the *Institute of Education*. I negotiated a deferment of the scholarship until the beginning of 1997, and undertook to establish the school and work as Foundation Principal for the first two years of its operation. The convergence of my appointment as principal at BCC with the winning of the scholarship provided me with an ideal context in which to plan and shape my research.

Whilst in the process of establishing the school from July, 1994, I recorded and documented in a personal journal, many of the events associated with the day to day running of a large new secondary school during the early planning and implementation stages. I also collected documents related not only to the school itself, but also to the wider political and bureaucratic contexts.

During 1996, I completed a small project as part of my Masters' in Science Education Degree that looked at the leadership challenges associated with implementing new initiatives in a new school. This study (Larsen, 1996) examined six teachers' perspectives and responses during the opening stages of the middle school at BCC. Since the study was limited in scope I felt a need to expand the inquiry. My sense was that the policy influences needed to be examined more thoroughly to include a more systematic analysis of the influences of new policies on the implementation of change and innovation at BCC. That is, I wanted to be able to deal simultaneously with both policy and practice in order to incorporate both micro and macro dimensions into the study (Raab, 1994).

It was this motivation to address change through the policy lens that led me to build on my original study to a more comprehensive analysis of the data generated in the first two and a half years of the establishment of the school. I expanded the research database by addressing system-level policies and documentation. In doing so, I identified and interviewed a range of agents associated with the establishment of the school. These included, the leader of the State School Teachers' Union of Western Australia (henceforth SSTUWA), architects of the school, the Minister for Education, Senior Officers from

EDWA and a neighbouring school principal who had been closely associated with the development of BCC.

As Foundation Principal I had the freedom to select staff, contribute to building design and site planning, plan curriculum and an imprimatur to 'be innovative'. Since the State had initiated the Project, it would be reasonable to expect that change and innovation would be relatively easy and well supported. On the surface, responding to the challenge to open a new school on a green-field site would seem to be an 'ideal' of many principals and educators. However, as Foundation Principal, I found the process that unfolded in the establishment BCC both exciting and turbulent.

In this study I argue that school change and innovation does not always begin with a focus on students and their learning, but can evolve through the contestations between broader social and political forces. I will present an analysis of the relationship between the micro setting of the school and the broader social, economic and political setting of WA. Like Ball (1994a) I argue that it is not possible to view school change and innovation without analysing these inter-relationships.

1.4 Definition of Concepts Used in the Study

In this section I will outline the following concepts: change and innovation, policy, texts and discourse, culture, ideology, middle schooling, and systemic schools, that I have used in theorising my research. A number of these terms are examined more thoroughly in chapters four and five, however, I provide the following definitions as an introduction.

Change and Innovation

'Change' in relation to education is ubiquitous. It is a difficult term to pin down in relation to schools because it has been used interchangeably across the full spectrum of concepts relating to curriculum, governance and assessment (Altrichter, 2000). I have adopted Marsh's focus on change and innovation as a planned intentional process, because the implementation of change at BCC was directed at fundamental changes to the structure of lower secondary education, as it was known, in WA. Coupled with this change were a number of significant changes linked to a broader devolution agenda.

Marsh suggests that the term 'change' can denote both planned and unplanned

shifts and is a generic term used widely to incorporate 'innovation, development and adoption' (*ibid.*). For Marsh the term 'innovation':

(M)ay mean either a new object, idea, or practice, or the process by which a new object, idea or project comes to be adopted by an individual group or organization.

(Marsh, 1997: 185)

Fink defines innovation as 'a new idea, method or invention' (Fink, 1997 :12), and recognises the importance of context. Fink (*ibid.*) defined innovative new schools as those 'in which the staff is prepared to introduce and experiment with educational practices that substantially alter the 'grammar' of schooling' (p.12). Innovation in new schools is also typically associated 'with strategies and processes that involve experimentation with non-traditional purposes, roles, relationships, structures and culture' (Fink, *ibid.*). Fink suggests that what is seen as innovative in one context may not be considered innovative in other settings/countries. That is, the 'context of situation' and 'context of culture' (Halliday & Hasan, 1985: 6) are important in defining innovation with respect to new schools.

The theoretical approach used in this thesis recognises that change is always materialised in and through discourse. Texts, as the material realisation of discourses, are systems of signs that are constantly changing, reflecting changes in the broader social and cultural settings. As Hodge and Kress suggest:

Terms in a system have value by virtue of their place in that system. At the same time, a system is constantly being reproduced and reconstituted in texts. Otherwise it would cease to exist. So texts are both the material realization of systems of signs, and also the site where change continually takes place.

(Hodge & Kress, 1988: 6)

In the context of establishing a new school within WA, terms relating to curriculum, to workplace and recruitment practices and to secondary schooling more generally were

being reworked and reconstituted. These processes of change were constitutive not just of the systems of knowledge but also of the social identities and relationships of those associated with establishing BCC.

Policy

In Chapter four I provide a more detailed discussion of the term 'policy'. For now however I will indicate that in this thesis I am centrally concerned with the relationships between policy processes and the social practices associated with policy making. Policy cannot be reduced to an abstract set of steps, or a formulaic list of stages that function independently of the meaning and the social, political and historical context. Therefore, the term 'policy' is used in this thesis to refer to the multiple texts that arise from the process of 'policy in the making'. Policy in this sense is seen, as a material process as well as a social semiotic practice which results in a variety of representations arising from struggles and contestations: 'they are textual interventions into practice' (Ball, 1994a :18).

Texts and Discourse

The term 'text' is used within the thesis to mean: any representation, socially made, complete, integrated in its environments in a number of cultural (semiotic) modes through which members of a culture, take, receive, make and remake meaning (Kress, Spoken Communication, 2000). In viewing texts from a social semiotic perspective 'texts' including spoken, graphic, drawn, architectural, built and most generally actional forms (Lemke, 1998) are understood as the material realisations of discourse (Halliday, 1978; Hodge & Kress, 1988; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996; O'Toole, 1994). From a policy perspective, this means that I am not focussing exclusively on the finished policy text: nor do I see meaning making occurring through language alone. Rather, I am interested in how policy meanings are negotiated and made with all of the resources at our disposal: that is through a range of modes.

The term 'discourse' was well elaborated by Foucault, who recognised that social processes involved the creation of 'preferred' meanings that served as a framework of inclusions and exclusions (Foucault, 1978). That is, discourses define rules about what can and cannot be said, by whom, and when. In this sense, discourses interpolate

subjectivity within a field of power relations and therefore functions as both possibility and limitation (Romero, 1998). Discourse analysis has been defined in many ways (Jaworski & Coupland, 1999; Macdonell, 1986; Thompson, 1984; Titscher, Meyer, Wodak, & Vetter, 2000) and is increasingly being used by policy researchers (Codd, 1988; Fulcher, 1989; McHoul, 1984; Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard, & Henry, 1997) as a means of 'getting inside' the policy process. Given the variety of definitions of discourse, I have focused on those that emphasise the constitutive and constituting nature of discourse (Fairclough, 1992). Hodge & Kress, (1993) suggest that 'discourse' has a general sense equivalent to 'semiosis' (the construction and circulation of signs)' (p.158). Fairclough, (1992) proposes a complementary definition of discourse suggesting that 'Discourse constitutes the social ... social relations, social identity and knowledge' (p.28) are determined and shaped by discourse. The effects of discourse upon society, outlined by Fairclough, correspond closely to the three 'metafunctions' of language described by Halliday, (1978); the experiential (the representation of events), the interpersonal (negotiating social relations) and the textual (the weaving together of the experiential and interpersonal functions of meaning). Fairclough, (1992) also recognises the importance of acknowledging that 'discourse as an ideological practice constitutes naturalizes, sustains and changes significations of the world from diverse positions of power relations' (p. 67).

'As a term then, discourse conjoins language use as text and practice' (Deacon, Pickering, Golding, & Murdock, 1999 :147). In the context of this study, the focus on discourse and texts is designed to sharpen the gaze on the ongoing process of social semiosis in the setting of the Western Australian education community in the mid 1990s. By examining the process of text production and scrutinising texts within the social and historical context of establishing a new government secondary school in WA, I provide an analysis of the discursive struggles associated with policy-making processes in the context of establishing a new school. While Discourse Analysis has typically focussed on linguistically realised texts, the social semiotic approach that I utilise, recognises that we do not make meaning with language alone (Lemke, 1998). Social semiotics is concerned with how we make meaning with all the resources at our disposal. Meaning making 'is the result of cognitive/semiotic work in any semiotic mode' (Kress, 1997b :3). In the multi-modal approach suggested by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) and Lemke

(1998) the method involves analysis of all the representational modes which are at play in any text.

As Lemke stresses:

In countless texts and acts of meaning-making the members of a community simultaneously use language and the semiotic systems of depiction and graphics, movement and gesture, music, fashion, food and every other mode of socially meaningful action in their culture.

(Lemke, 1998: 1)

Ideology

Within this study, the emphasis is on examining the inscription of social power within discourses and evident within texts, related to and arising from a range of policies that impacted on the establishment of BCC. The term 'ideology' is widely used in research related to school change and innovation, most notably within post-structural analyses, which focus on discourse. Within the context of this study, I have adopted a semiotic theory of ideology, proposed in the first instance by Voloshinov, (1973) and later taken forward by Michel Pecheux, (cf. Eagleton, 1991; Montgomery, 1992) and Hodge and Kress (1993).

A semiotic theory of ideology emphasises the relationship between language and other modes of representation, power and ideology. 'Ideology', suggests Eagleton 'has to do with *legitimizing* the power of a dominant social group or class' (ibid.:5). Power is also an effect of discourse. As such, each *discursive formation* prescribes a set of rules 'which determine what can and must be said from a certain position within social life; and expressions have meaning only by virtue of the discursive formations within which they occur, changing significance as they are transported from one to the other' (Eagleton, ibid.). This definition by Eagleton suggests that ideologies are not static and fixed, but are dynamic and in a constant state of change. As Martin argues:

Ideology can be interpreted more as a type of language dependent on the use to which language is put. Here we are looking at ideology in crisis, undergoing a process of change during which speakers take up options to challenge or defend some worldview that has prevailed to that point in time.

(Martin, 1986, cited in Mills, 1995: 12)

Culture

Halliday and Hasan suggest that culture 'is an integrated body of the total set of meanings available to a community: its semiotic potential ... which includes ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying' (Halliday & Hasan, 1985 :99). The intersection of 'culture' and 'power' calls into play key questions concerning the capacity for individuals to negotiate the wide range of power across different discursive spaces, in order to effect change and innovation in schools.

For Halliday and Hasan, 'semiotic potential is culture' (ibid.: 100, original emphasis). '(W)ays of doing, ways of being and ways of saying' (ibid.) are directly related to a given situation and culture. For example, in this study, the introduction of middle schooling was a new construct. In other Australian States, and in other countries, middle schooling was an established and distinct phase of schooling (Hargreaves, 1986). In WA, the opening of BCC as a middle school created a 'situation' which threw into relief quite distinct issues relative to the existing 'situational values' (Halliday & Hasan, 1985 :100) associated with secondary schooling. The existing situational values, which had been normalised into the discourse of secondary schooling in WA, were being challenged and reworked through new discourses associated with middle schooling, community participation, integrated curriculum and new employment practices.

Middle Schooling

Until the opening of BCC, schooling within WA had been organised into primary - pre-primary through to year seven (ages 5-12), and secondary, year eight to twelve, (ages 13-17). The opening of BCC signalled the introduction of 'middle schooling' as a distinct phase of schooling in WA and for the first time, this terminology found its way into the State educational discourse. In this study, I have used the term to signify the school years 7-9, in line with the emerging trend in Australia to rethink the organisational structures and pedagogical approaches for the schooling of adolescents (Eyers, Cormack & Barrat, 1992; NBEET, 1993). There is not agreement on the ages that define the middle years. Throughout Australian States, different school systems have denoted the middle years in different ways, depending on existing primary and secondary schooling. In some States, middle schooling encompasses primary and secondary years, in other States middle

schooling is associated more with lower secondary schooling (Jackson, 1999).

Systemic Schools

I have used the term 'systemic schools' to refer to public primary and secondary schools which have traditionally come under the jurisdiction of the Western Australian State Education Bureaucracy, EDWA.

1.5 Authorial Styles used in this Thesis

Eisner, in his article, *The Promise and Perils of Alternative Forms of Data Representation*, suggests that '(H)ow one writes shapes what one can say' (Eisner, 1997 :4). In structuring the thesis, I have adopted a reflexive approach (Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Steier, 1991) incorporating two main authorial styles. The first, and dominant authorial style is in keeping with the stylistic conventions typically associated with writing a Ph.D. I have however, adopted a first-person authorial style. This writing style situates the work within a paradigm that acknowledges that the act of constructing an account is a highly personal enterprise. As Salmon suggests, writing in the first person:

allows - in fact, demands - that what is said reflects the particular situation, experience, understandings and dilemmas of the speaker. It is ultimately those which govern the meaning, or lack of meaning, that any academic material will have.

(Salmon cited in Weil, 1989 :20)

The research was undertaken in two distinct phases. The period between July 1994 and December 1996 was the time when I was Principal of the school. In 1997 I assumed a different social identity: that of Ph.D. researcher. In this sense the study embodies a 'double historicity' (Wulf, 1996 :49): the historicity of planning, opening and working as Foundation Principal of BCC, 'and that of the investigation itself' (ibid.) The second authorial style acknowledges this 'double historicity' (ibid.) and draws on autobiographical data to theorise the process of change and innovation at BCC. In adopting an autobiographical approach (Graham, 1991), I have incorporated vignettes to exemplify different aspects of the study and to situate the work in relation to my own

stance and epistemological journey. They serve not only as a focus for the juxtaposition of the everyday context of the process of establishing a new school, but also as a 'counterpoint to the chronological story' (Weil, 1989 :19).

The vignettes are situated in a different time and location - a time when I occupied an entirely different position to that of researcher. Most recount experiences associated with my roles as school principal or leader of large curriculum projects implemented throughout the government school system in WA. They are written from a different subjective positioning and are incorporated to 'provide a sense of particularity': (Eisner, 1997 :8) of myself as school principal and as an agent in the policy process. The vignettes are also included in order to provide the readers of the work with the historical context and an understanding of the 'real world' of a newly established school. Through these accounts, I seek to provide what Denzin and Lincoln describe as 'some powerful prepositional, tacit, intuitive, emotional, historical, poetic and empathetic experience of the Other via the texts (we/I) write' (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994 :582). The vignettes should be read as 'mediated texts', crafted by myself as principal, influenced by my own reading of the situation and my own subjectivity and read alongside the empirical analysis, for as Ericson suggests:

(E)ven the most richly detailed vignette is a reduced account, clearer than life ... it does not represent the original *event itself*, for this is impossible ... [It] is an abstraction: an analytic caricature (of a friendly sort) ... that highlights the author's interpretative perspective.

(Ericson cited in Miles & Huberman, 1994 :83, original emphasis)

In adopting two authorial styles, I argue that each style serves a complementary purpose in shaping the thesis. The vignettes provide 'a concrete, focussed story which will be vivid (and) compelling' (Miles & Huberman, 1994 :83) in order to serve as an elaboration of the events and give 'contextual richness' (ibid.) to the main body of the research. The main body of the thesis provides a different 'take' on the context of establishing the school. It is a revisiting of a 'familiar place' in a different location, and through a different lens - a 'second distancing' (Todorov, 1984) which allows me to 'cast

at it the look of a foreigner' (ibid.) in order make sense of the experience and to theorise policy processes in action.

Citations from Field Data

Citations from interview data are signalled within the study in italicised print. These quotations are used to substantiate the points made within the empirical framework. In selecting citations I have been rigorous in my attempts to represent the intent of the comments as fairly and honestly as possible. A full list of the interviewees, including a description of their individual roles, is included in the Appendix 1 (page 315). I discuss the issues associated with transcription of interviews more thoroughly in the methodology chapter, however I signal the stylistic conventions as an initial introduction.

Use of Appendix

Whilst the main body of the thesis has been written to stand alone, a number of documents have been included in the appendix. These documents provide additional information relevant to specific content presented in the main body of the thesis. Where reference is made to materials within the appendix, the item is indicated with a page number for ease of access.

1.6 Outline of the Thesis

The thesis is organised into five sections as follows:

Part One – The Problem, Setting and Context

Chapter two provides contextual background to the study and includes details of Australian educational policy at both Federal and State levels. The discussion includes historical background of significant policies and initiatives for innovation and change in WA and draws extensively on educational change literature in order to highlight the origins of many of the changes being proposed at BCC. The chapter also provides a description of the processes used in establishing BCC as Western Australia's first State middle school within a secondary school, as well as significant policies which were influential in determining the directions of change in the State education system.

Chapter three provides a description of BCC, including information relating to the processes and procedures used to establish the school. This chapter serves as a further context for the analytical chapters.

Part Two - Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Chapter four is organised into two main parts. The first is a review of contemporary educational policy literature. While there is an enormous range of literature relating to what schools should and could do to change, I have taken on board Popkewitz and Brennan's criticism 'that many of the dominant and liberal educational reform discourses tend to instrumentally organise change as logical and sequential' (Popkewitz & Brennan, 1998 :7). I examine the educational policy literature and discuss the dominant discourses that have gained valence in recent times. I then talk about the increasing tendency within policy research to use discourse analysis as a means of explicating a more thorough understanding of policy processes.

Chapter four also includes a more thorough explanation of critical discourse analysis and social semiotics providing a rationale for their theoretical and methodological value in this study.

Chapter five outlines the research methodology. This chapter provides a description of the processes undertaken in the collection and selection of data for the study. The chapter also provides a discussion relating to the atypical role that I adopt as researcher and Foundation Principal of BCC. In this chapter I also address the theoretical considerations of autobiographical narrative and issues of reflexivity as part of the research process.

Part Three – Contestations revealed within the Case Study

Chapters six through eight provide a discussion and analysis of the data around the four key policy areas that are central to addressing the research questions. Each of the chapters focuses on how agents within the discursive field of education in WA, and more particularly within the context of BCC, participated in the mediation and transformation of policy. The first of these, Chapter six provides an analysis of two policy changes initiated at BCC. These include the introduction of middle schooling and expanding the role of 'the community' in the decision making process. In this chapter I provide

evidence of the shifting social and political contexts which resulted in the uncertain commitment to the establishment of BCC as the State's first middle school. During the time of the establishment of BCC, the Western Australian government and the State education bureaucracy circulated discourses that were aimed at mobilising the local Ballajura community in order to win support for the establishment of BCC as the State's first middle school. While overcrowding in local primary schools was identified as a key factor for including year seven students, the particular construction of reality was 'delocated and relocated into the pedagogical situation' (Cho & Apple, 1998: 270). Thus middle schooling, with all its 'educational advantages' was the predominant discourse used to mobilise support. Within a 'recontextualising field' (Bernstein, 1996 :116), the actors within the school community - teachers, students, union leaders, parents and community members, mediated, reinterpreted, transformed, and struggled in order to make meaning of the policies relating to the establishment the State's first middle school.

Chapter seven focuses on the impact of new State government policies relating to employment practices that impacted BCC in two significant ways. In the first instance, there were major changes to employment policies and practices in respect to the selection of the principal. A second impact resulted in the introduction of site-based merit selection at BCC, and limited term tenured appointments for all staff. This chapter provides an explanation of some of the difficulties encountered in the early stages of the establishment of the school and reveals many of the contestations associated with the processes of navigating policy changes within the changing social contexts of the State.

Chapter eight focuses on the data relating to the architectural arrangements at BCC. This chapter raises issues with respect to the relationship between school buildings and their impact on change and innovation. In this chapter I demonstrate the way in which State policies were conflated with educational policies and then mediated and transformed by planners and architects of the school. This chapter expands on the discussion relating to community involvement in planning BCC, demonstrating how this policy was imbricated into the BCC buildings.

Part Four – Key Findings and Conclusion

The final chapter, Chapter nine provides a discussion of the overall findings of the study. These findings are discussed firstly in relation to the research questions posed and secondly in relation to how they support broader issues of innovation and school change in secondary education. The chapter also includes a discussion of the research methods, including the contributions of the study, its strengths and weaknesses, as well as suggestions for future enquiries.

Part Five –Bibliography and Appendices

Part five includes the bibliography and appendices. The appendices include documentary evidence as discussed within the thesis.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the scope of the study, including the rationale, the research questions, the framework of the study, and some key definitions. As I have suggested the study focuses on the contestations arising from change and innovation in the context of four key policy areas which were influential in the establishment of BCC, a new Western Australian government secondary school.

Chapter two provides the contextual background to the research site. The chapter provides an overview of State education in WA, because it was within this context that BCC was established.

Chapter Two

Historical Antecedents - Policy Contexts of Change and Innovation in Western Australia

2.1 Introduction

In order to understand both the 'broad and local contexts' (Cicourel, 1992: 295) in which discourses of change and innovation circulated, it is important to trace the broader policy initiatives that impacted on the establishment of BCC. In this chapter I provide an overview of the Western Australian State education system. I make reference to a range of National and State projects and policies that impacted indirectly or directly on the design and implementation of change and innovation of BCC. In addition, I discuss the major EDWA policy reports on change, that were released prior to the opening of BCC. I also discuss the local and my own personal contexts. There were multiple policy agendas being developed by EDWA in the lead up to the establishment of BCC and these had a profound influence on the establishment of the school. From 1987 onwards there was an intensification of policy changes directed towards devolution (Hoffman, 1994) and many of these changes impacted significantly on the design of BCC. I begin the chapter with a brief introduction of education in the National context and then provide a more detailed discussion of the Western Australian government school system, making specific reference to significant policy changes that later influenced the establishment of BCC.

2.2 Education at the National Level in Australia

In Australia, the Federal Government does not have constitutional responsibility for education (Robertson, 1994). Individual State systems are enacted by the respective State parliaments and administered through their educational bureaucracies. State systems determine State-wide legislative frameworks and policies for most operational procedures in the delivery of education. This means that there is significant variation from State to State. For example, there are differences in starting ages, transition ages from primary to secondary schooling, curriculum, assessment, industrial conditions for teachers and

school governance procedures.

Whilst Australia's education system is legislated and administered at the State level, national funding policies do impact significantly on State-level bureaucracies. In fact, increasingly, there has been greater intervention and intrusion by the Federal government into State-level policy (Luke, Lingard, Green, & Comber, 2000). The Australian Education Council determines national goals for schooling and ties the attainment of these goals, along with other determinants, to national funding of State education systems. A case in point is, *The National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools*, promoted by the Hawke Labour government, as part of the *National Agenda for Women* (Taylor et al., 1997). It is a notable example, since all State education bureaucracies participated in a major policy initiative.

Since the late 1980s, under the 'meta policy' (Yeatman, 1990) of economic restructuring, the federal political structure of Australia has experienced economic and social change. At the same time, radical changes in industrial relations legislation at the federal level, such as the Industrial Relations Commission's (IRC) landmark decision of March 1987, meant that wage rises were to be linked to increases in productivity (Robertson, 1996). This legislation precipitated significant changes in educational policy-making at both federal and State levels, resulting in a redefinition of 'Minister-bureaucrat relationship(s)'. It also resulted in governments at all levels pursuing narrower and more tightly controlled policy agendas with a related emphasis on policy outcomes in a situation of limited financial inputs' (Lindgard, 1996: 41-42).

One effect of federal level policy changes relating to the IRC decision, was that education policy became sharply focussed on economic reforms. Most State education bureaucracies were subsequently restructured under the rubric of 'corporate managerialism' (Pusey, 1991). At the State level, the focus on economic concerns resulted in the devolution of responsibilities to local administrations to ensure greater 'efficiency and effectiveness' (Taylor et al., 1997: 80) of policy delivery.

Corporate managerialist approaches emphasised the need for increased efficiency and a reduction in costs. Additional features that were stressed included: 'corporate planning, programme budgeting, programme goals, performance indicators, some performance-based employment contracts for senior managers, appointment of generic

managers expert in management but not in a specific professional domain, a more flexible 'hiring and firing' regime (beyond the career public service) and the introduction of efficiency audits and the like' (Taylor et al., 1997).

In 1987, corporate managerialist approaches were adopted by EDWA as a means of devolving administrative tasks and budgets to local schools (Hoffman, 1994). Many of the 'corporate managerialist' features suggested by Taylor (ibid.) were referred to in the report Better Schools (Ministry of Education Western Australia³, 1987) and implemented in the five years prior to the establishment of BCC. The report, Better Schools (ibid.) was significant because it signalled a radical change for public education in WA, a key aspect of which was a commitment to devolution. Devolution took place under the banner of 'restructuring' which linked educational change to the broader politics of economic restructuring (Hoffman, 1994). The Western Australian government's intention to further extend the devolution agenda coincided with the opening of BCC. The domino effect of this was that BCC was viewed as a potential testing ground for pushing forward the devolution agenda in policy areas including site-based merit selection and tenure of principals and teachers, and the expanded involvement of the community.

2.2.1 School Restructuring

Halsey and his colleagues (Halsey, Lauder, Brown, & Stuart-Wells, 1997) have detailed one of the most comprehensive analyses of school restructuring. Their initial discussion and later chapters provide an overview of the definition and effects of restructuring on education over the last decade. In their introductory discussion, the authors suggest that the term 'restructuring' has been widely used to describe the process of change in schools and is generally linked to widespread changes to the economy and the state. The authors suggest that radical economic and cultural changes in Anglophone countries have resulted in a redefinition of relations within the state, linked to New Right and Neo-Conservative (Brown, Halsey, Lauder, & Stuart-Wells, 1997) ideologies. Underscoring the economic and cultural changes have been new policies relating to the way in which the state positions itself with respect to individuals' lives (Halsey et al., 1997: 20).

³ The title 'Ministry of Education Western Australia' was a temporary change during the period 1987-1993. With the exception of this period, the State education bureaucracy has been titled 'The Education Department of Western Australia' (EDWA).

The defining element in the restructuring of education in Australia has been the imposition of the virtues of economic rationalism and the 'new managerialism' (Marshall & Peters, 1999: xxv). This has resulted in 'devolution', 'choice', 'competition' and 'flexibility' being advocated by both federal and State level policy makers in Australia (Robertson, 1996: 43). In general, the political economy of the New Right argued that competition and private enterprise were key to improving productivity and a way to redress the dependence created by the economic nationalist welfare state. Central to this argument was the premise that individuals are responsible for their own destinies and that the poor and those dependent on the state should be provided with incentives to establish a culture of individual enterprise as a vehicle for economic competitiveness. The implication for schools was that they were viewed as structures that exist within the broader social, political and economic structure and that they too should 'restructure' in line with changes in wider society, in order to extract greater value for the educational dollar. Here the changing ideology gave primacy to human capital theory (Fitzsimons & Peters, 1994) linking micro economic reform to schooling.

Making reference to 'restructuring' Kenway, (1997: 336) suggests that the two major dimensions of restructuring of education in Australia are centralisation and decentralisation. For Kenway, centralisation refers largely to the process of state influence on matters relating to curriculum, training and professional development and accountability. Decentralisation on the other hand, relates to the process of devolution, local management of schools, 'deregulation, dezoning, disaggregation and deinstitutionalisation' (ibid.). Kenway argues that many of the decentralisation strategies in Australia, as elsewhere, were aimed at destabilising unions and other organisations, including central bureaucracies and parent representative groups in order to effect fundamental changes to the schooling system. She notes:

Without doubt the economy is the master discourse and its associated rationalisation and efficiencies dominate both sides of the agenda. There is no perfect equilibrium between these two agendas and it is predictable that struggles will eventuate between them, and that largely because of funding cuts to schools, the decentralising/ marketising/ commercialising/

privatising agenda will win out, despite government efforts to maintain control through centralisation. Downsizing and outsourcing have become the order of the day.

(Kenway, 1997: 336)

From 1987, the 'restructuring agenda' has had a significant influence on Western Australian schools, primarily reorienting them away from strictly pedagogical and curriculum matters, to matters of accountability and control. Moreover, these changes resulted in widespread and dramatic changes to the management and control of schools in WA. The release of Better Schools (Ministry of Education, 1997) marked the beginning of a period of unprecedented activity for EDWA, with the introduction of a wide range of projects, reports and policies that were all aimed at restructuring the public education system.

2.3 The Western Australian Context - A Brief History of Change and Innovation

The Government of WA established the EDWA in 1895 'with a mandate for free, secular and compulsory education' (Angus & Olney, 1998: 5). Alongside these philosophical ideals was a commitment to 'uniformity and control' (ibid.). This commitment resulted in the view that students from all over the geographically vast State of WA - be they in metropolitan, rural or in remote and isolated communities, could rightfully expect 'a common curriculum taught by qualified teachers in schools designed and organised around common principles' (ibid.). The public education system became synonymous with the EDWA, with centralised governance and control spawning bureaucratic and administrative structures, which endured, largely unchanged, until the late 1980s.

The 'uniformity principle' resonated with egalitarian ideals espoused by most Western Australians, ensuring that a comprehensive curriculum in neighbourhood primary and secondary schools was viewed as 'an emblem of social cohesion' (Angus & Olney, 1998 :7). There were no selection criteria for entry to schools, apart from regional zoning that determined school catchment areas. Common entry ages, resourcing, staffing and curriculum were all applied through centralised EDWA policies and legislative

frameworks.

Until the early 1980s EDWA paid trainee teachers through a bonding system that required that they would teach anywhere across the State for a period equivalent to the period of funded training. The bonding system and mandatory country service as a requirement for permanency and promotion meant that the central bureaucracy uniformly administered the staffing of systemic schools across the State. Consequently, government primary and secondary schools were relatively homogeneous. Schools in regional country and remote locations were generally staffed by new graduates and aspiring principals who had conditions of permanency and promotion linked to a minimum term 'country service'. For government schools, 'innovation' generally took the shape of school-based curriculum initiatives or wholesale systemic projects, (such as *First Steps* and *Stepping Out*) which were uniformly applied to schools across the State.

In 1994-1995, at the time of opening BCC, EDWA managed the delivery of education in approximately 767 government schools. In WA, in new, high growth urban suburbs, new schools often have rapid population growths, followed by a slow decline in student numbers, typically over a period of twenty years. To address the problem of declining student numbers, during the 1970s, some Western Australian secondary schools offered specialist programmes in order to attract students and to prop up declining enrolments in maturing suburbs. Programmes such as 'special art and music', were offered and in 1981, against a backdrop of opposition from some schools (Jenkins & Tuettemann, 1984), programmes for 'gifted and talented' students were reintroduced.⁴

The idea of specialisation expanded in WA, and programmes in a range of areas including cricket, aeronautics, music, art, hospitality, languages and dance were initiated in a number of secondary schools throughout the Perth metropolitan area (Angus, 2000). The central bureaucracy controlled the establishment of these specialist secondary schools and limited their number and location. In 1981, a State-wide policy for 'gifted and talented' students resulted in the establishment of a number of secondary schools being tagged for the provision of specialist 'gifted and talented' programmes. Secondary schools were selected in strategic locations around the metropolitan area and then

² Selection of students on the basis of intellectual ability had been disbanded previously, after opposition from some schools claiming that the most talented students were being 'creamed off'. See (Docking, Watt, & Joyce, 1978).

competed for students, based on academic testing.

This meant that existing zoning rules did not apply for students participating in these programmes. Thus, within a system that espoused uniformity and homogeneity, a quasi-selection process took shape. Notwithstanding the fact that the motivation to attract students rested largely on issues associated with declining enrolments and the economics of offering a broad curriculum, specialist secondary schools continued to offer a largely uniform curriculum. This was particularly evident in the lower secondary years (traditionally years 8-10), with specialist programmes being 'wrapped around' the standard curriculum, with after-school and some Saturday classes being used to 'top up' the area of specialisation.

In 1987, the introduction of a new lower secondary curriculum, (*The Unit Curriculum*) saw a strengthening of centralised control. Underpinning *The Unit Curriculum* was a motivation to provide lower secondary students with greater scope for flexibility and variation, and thus, more control over the units they studied (Dimmock & O'Donoghue, 1997; Klenowski, 1989). The intention for schools was to offer a wide range of units for lower secondary students who could select units according to their interests and ability. Whilst flexibility and student choice were implied in the original *Unit Curriculum* proposal, staffing ratios and limited resourcing meant that in fact, it became highly inflexible. Not only did schools find it difficult to timetable to accommodate the intended flexibility but the *Unit Curriculum* was implemented in extreme haste, with minimum in-service training for teachers and very few curriculum materials. Teachers across the State engaged in a flurry of activity to produce and disseminate unit materials through professional and personal networks and associations. It was therefore not uncommon to observe students in a remote Aboriginal community school in the far north of the State (as illustrated in the first vignette), participating in almost identical lessons to those students in metropolitan schools, with identical worksheets.

Under *The Unit Curriculum*, accountability rested largely with Subject Superintendents who were located in Perth, at the Central Office of EDWA. Subject Superintendents and members of the *Secondary Education Authority* visited secondary schools on an annual basis and engaged in moderation of unit materials and assessment

tasks and gradings. At the completion of Year 10, the final year of compulsory schooling in WA, students were provided with a school-based assessment and report, based on the units they had studied. Post compulsory students selected courses for either vocational or tertiary pathways and usually studied between four or six subjects in their final two years of schooling. Formal external assessment of students took place at the end of year 12, when students undertook State administered exams for tertiary entry and vocational training pathways.

2.3.1 Alternative Schools within the EDWA

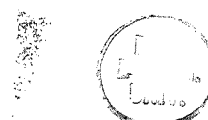
The pattern of homogeneity evident in EDWA policies meant that opportunity for variation in the lower secondary areas, other than curriculum specialisation in 'specialist high schools', was rare. Certainly, the centralised structures of Subject Superintendents and staffing meant that EDWA formally monitored and moderated teachers, to ensure consistency of curriculum across the State. EDWA did however have two previous forays into establishing alternative schools within the regulated system. These included the establishment of Willetton and Wanneroo High Schools and Spearwood Alternative School, a primary school on the fringes of the south metropolitan corridor.

Wanneroo and Willetton High Schools

These two secondary schools were both opened in 1977 with promises of innovative structures and alternative operations. Unlike all other systemic schools, EDWA opened the schools with the opportunity for merit selection of the principal and staff. While the schools were initially held up as 'alternative' schools within the system, by the 1980s each came under the standard regulatory frameworks governing appointments of teachers and the principal. Consequently, they took on the appearance of most secondary schools within the system. By the 1990s, there was very little to distinguish either school from standard neighbourhood high schools, and centralised appointments of staff, standard curriculum structures and governance were reintroduced.

Spearwood Alternative Primary School

Spearwood Alternative School was established by EDWA established under the auspices of the *Commonwealth Schools Commission Project for Choice and Diversity in Government Schooling* (Angus & Olney, 1998: 32). This primary school, established in



1984, was the first government school in WA with greater flexibility for staff selection and curriculum development. Not only did this government school have power to select its own principal and teaching staff, it was given the opportunity to implement local governance procedures, through the establishment of a School Council made up of parent and student representatives. Whilst the school had the potential to lead the way in greater flexibility within a highly regulated government system, it remained a lone example. There was no further expansion of alternative government-run primary schools within WA. These examples illustrate that EDWA had a tendency to initiate policies supporting change and innovation in schools but lacked the supporting structures to ensure continuity.

2.3.2 National Policy Initiatives Influencing Change in WA

Better Schools (op. cit.) was the beginning of a period of unprecedented change in Western Australian government schools. For government schools, the climate of change resulted in a continual flow of national and State 'projects' and policies that were directed at different areas of curriculum, school organisation, pedagogy and governance. In addition to radical curriculum reform at the lower secondary level with the introduction of *The Unit Curriculum*, EDWA drew on a number of federal government projects to advance the restructuring agenda. These included the National Project for the Quality of Teaching and Learning (NPQTL) and National Schools Network (NSN).

The NPQTL and the associated *National Schools Project* were aimed at school-level restructuring and were 'the most substantial of the micro reforms' (Dimmock & O'Donoghue, 1997: 39) taking place in WA in the early 1990s. The projects resulted in schools implementing restructuring initiatives at the local level. Many focussed on increased involvement of teachers in decision making with a view to increased professionalism and empowerment.

The focus of much of the above work was derived from educators like Caldwell & Spinks, (1988), who advocated that schools should foster the professional autonomy and leadership of teachers, in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning. While these projects did not allow for radical measures - such as those in other countries, where schools pulled out totally from the 'web of governmental directives, policies, guidelines and rules' (Murphy & Hallinger, 1993: 11) a number of Western Australian schools

sought, and were granted, permission to override regulations in part. These dispensations related to class sizes, staff meeting times and school hours, which were the focus of school-based innovation and change.

Whilst individual schools successfully implemented minor changes through the NPQTL and the NSN the initiatives did not result in wholesale change. The 'one size fits all' (Angus & Olney, 1998: 33) model of education in Western Australian government secondary schools was a prevailing and enduring one. Given the multiple policy agendas and projects that were being implemented, this raises the question of what specifically did 'change and innovation' mean to EDWA at this time.

Clearly there had been some motivation, albeit minor, to break away from the uniformity of regulatory frameworks within EDWA, and allow for localised alternatives. As one interviewee for this study described, they remained as 'side-shows' (EDWA SO 7). It appears that EDWA never intended the NPQTL schools to serve as lighthouses for significant change at either the school or system level, but rather, as one-off forays into minor change. Angus and Olney suggest one reason for the limited effect of the Projects:

Regulatory exemptions do not give staff members working in schools enough power to develop and sustain genuine alternatives to the generic government school ... and the ecology of government school systems prohibits the growth of alternative schools.

(Angus & Olney, 1998: 33)

In general, apart from minor variations within EDWA's one hundred-year history to 1995, the system was one that was always highly centralised, highly structured and uniform. There was little or no scope for individual schools or districts to enact major innovations outside existing regulatory frameworks and structures. Given the degree of homogeneity within EDWA, and overall tendency for secondary schools to remain highly regulated, the obvious question for BCC was: what were the policy motivations behind the decision to initiate change and innovation? Could BCC provide new opportunities for innovation and change within a highly centralised system given that the opening of the school was expressly articulated as a State-government and EDWA initiative?

Flexibility in Schools Project (FISP)

In 1993, the Australian Federal Government negotiated with the State and Territory Teacher Unions to establish the National Schools Network (NSN). The project was created to 'promote the improvement of teaching and learning for all Australian students' (SSTUWA, 1994 (September) :2). Under the auspices of the NSN, EDWA, in collaboration with the State School Teachers' Union of Western Australia (SSTUWA) established *The Flexibility in Schools Project* with an expressed focus on 'reform of work organisation and related pedagogy, and the establishment of a more supportive environment' (ibid.).

The significance of the *FISP* for BCC was that EDWA later used this project to initiate changes to employment practices. The focus of the project was on change and innovation through whole school projects and EDWA advertised the following criteria for selection of schools:

- Broad agreement by staff regarding the project;
- A commitment to work organisation change;
- A commitment to participative decision making, and
- A commitment to planning and evaluation of the work of the school.

(EDWA, 1993b)

Like the NPQTL, the *FISP* was a 'waiver project' (Angus, 1997: 62). Although the project was ostensibly aimed at involving teachers in identifying those structures and regulations that constrained their work, as stated in the articulated goals above, in 1993 EDWA used the *FISP* as the vehicle for introducing site-based merit selection in new schools, including BCC. I discuss this more fully in Chapter seven.

2.3.3 EDWA Policy Reports for Change

The Beazley Report

Two major reports had significant policy implications for education in WA and impacted schools in the 1980s and 1990s. These reports signalled changes that were to be implemented for the first time with the opening of BCC. The first report, The Beazley Report (Beazley, 1984) was released in 1984, following the appointment of Bob Pearce

as Minister for Education in the Australian Labor Party (ALP). Despite the brief to investigate the State's education system, the terms of reference expressly excluded an investigation of the structure of the EDWA:

The Committee noted that its terms of reference did
not seek investigation of the structure of the EDWA.
(Beazley, 1984: 16)

As Haynes (1997) suggests, 'it was an establishment, expert committee' (p.95) with a clearly defined brief to inquire into '14 specific terms of reference' (ibid.). Many of the recommendations were made within existing systems, 'commending the continuation and improvement of existing practices' Haynes (ibid.). Not surprisingly, given the representation of the group and the wide ranging consultation process used, most of the recommendations were generally well accepted. However, there was opposition from the SSTUWA to the pace of implementation of the *Unit Curriculum*, the major curriculum change proposed for lower secondary (years 8-10). At a mass meeting of Union members in July 1986 a motion of no confidence in the Minister for Education was proposed and passed. The Union President (somewhat naively) claimed:

The time has now arrived when teachers must speak
out and resist moves to have the curriculum
politicised. We owe it to the children we teach.
(SSTUWA, 1986)

Following the release of The Beazley Report (Beazley, 1984) a working party of EDWA and SSTUWA representatives suggested that EDWA would not adopt Recommendations 130-138. These recommendations suggested changes to promotional structures, including prioritising special promotions (based on merit) over seniority promotions and 'that half the promotions should go to women' (Haynes, 1997: 98). At the time men held five hundred promotional positions and only twenty-five women held such posts (Haynes, ibid.). Clearly, these recommendations had the potential to impact hugely on the status of women in EDWA, which had had a long history of men as leaders, and women as subordinates. Paradoxically, it was not until the opening of BCC, that the

recommendations made in The Beazley Report (ibid.) relating to merit selection, were fully implemented.

Better Schools – A Programme for Improvement

Three years after The Beazley Report (ibid.), EDWA released the Better Schools - A Programme for Improvement (hereafter, Better Schools (Ministry of Education, 1987). Like The Beazley Report, Better Schools (ibid.) argued for the move to the devolution of responsibilities for school management, greater school-level financial accountability and the instigation of School Based Decision Making Groups (School Councils). These were all major policy shifts for State education in WA. Local staff selection and performance management were again highlighted as policy directions, however, it was not until 1995, with the opening of a number of new schools, including BCC, that these two initiatives were implemented.

Following the release of Better Schools, (ibid.) an intensive program of devolution and restructuring was underway in Western Australian government schools. In addition to the introduction of *The Unit Curriculum* in lower secondary, EDWA implemented significant changes to the structure of districts, the relationships between schools and the central bureaucracy, and the frameworks for accountability. The implementation of these policies resulted in the devolution of responsibilities for site-based management of budgets, and the subsequent rhetoric of 'empowerment of staff and the community' through School-Based Decision-Making Bodies.

Accountability structures were also changed, locating the responsibility for monitoring the performance of teachers away from the external monitoring by subject Superintendents at the central level, to the school principal (Chadbourne, 1990). Whilst school principals were required to monitor the performance of teachers there was no formal framework or policy for how this should be undertaken, other than for temporary teachers, who were assessed each year, and new graduate teachers who were assessed for permanency. As a result, in some schools, principals undertook classroom observations and monitored programmes. In other schools there was little or no direct monitoring of classroom programmes and student achievement. As Hoffman (1994) suggested, 'the literal interpretation of the current requirements in schools with no teachers in these categories, [temporary teachers and new graduates] means the principal need never set

foot in a classroom' (p. 66). Notwithstanding that performance appraisal should not necessarily be linked to principals 'visiting classrooms', the fact remains that in many Western Australian government schools after Better Schools (ibid.) teachers experienced a high degree of autonomy with little or no supervision of classroom programmes and pedagogy being undertaken in some schools.

The impact of Better Schools required that teachers participate in a range of activities associated with School Decision Making and the production of a school development plan. As a result, Western Australian teachers experienced an increase in collegial and managerial tasks associated with these requirements (Robertson & Soucek, 1991). Teachers also experienced increasing pressure to attend meetings and the need to work longer hours per day and more days in the week, in order to meet new administrative commitments (ibid.). These effects of devolution strongly reflect similar patterns occurring in other parts of the world (Bullock & Thomas, 1997; Dale, 1997; Lauder, 1991; Popkewitz, 1996; Whitty, 1997a).

The reaction to many of the reforms and the restructuring of EDWA following the release of Better Schools reverberated throughout the system. Prior to the restructuring, many of the 'street level bureaucrats' (Lipsky, 1980), those who administered policies and provided services to schools from central office, held privileged knowledge about how decisions were made. This knowledge, which related directly to schools, was not always written in policy documents. Often, information was handed down from person-to-person (for example, formulae for staffing of new schools, transfers for teachers), and much was anecdotal and individually (and sometimes preferentially) constructed and applied.

At the Government and bureaucratic levels, there was the belief that some of the institutionalised work practices in schools and at the central level were obstructive to the implementation of major work place and educational reforms. After the release of Better Schools, there was a 'culling of dead wood but also of established wisdom' (Funnell, 1995) through early retirement packages offered to EDWA senior officers aged fifty years and over. 'Thirty-six of the forty-four senior officers, who were eligible, accepted the offer'. (Hoffman, 1994: 8). There was a strong message that the implementation of changes would result in efficiencies:

The Government took the view that it was no longer possible for the public sector to keep on increasing its share of the budget. Therefore, there was a need for us to be very much more effective and efficient ... The second reason is that the State (WA) system is very big.... Unless there is a reasonable measure of decentralisation - the whole system becomes very slow and unresponsive.

(*WA Education News*, February 26, 1987: 10 cited in Haynes, 1997: 100)

By the late 1980s, EDWA was sharply focussed on matters of accountability. Setting priorities, monitoring resources, formulating frameworks for accountability and improving and monitoring the quality of education in government schools against outcome measures were now required of Western Australian schools. Whilst autonomy and school-level responsibility were the backbone of rhetoric around devolution, there was also an increasing emphasis on centralised control of curriculum, target setting, monitoring and evaluation (Caldwell & Spinks, 1988). Discussions relating to the possible efficiencies using school buildings for extended times, joint funding between local and State government, greater flexibility with teacher-pupil ratios and school-based staff selection were also key items on the educational and industrial reform agendas. By 1994, EDWA had several of these major policy agendas as priorities for BCC.

In the early 1990s, work began on the writing of outcome statements in English and Mathematics and a central *Monitoring Standards in Education Project* was established in 1990 (Masters, 1994). Formal testing and reporting of students was introduced in English and mathematics in 1992, although results were reported on a school basis against a state-level norm, rather than on individual student level. School-level data was not published in league tables, as occurred in England and Wales (Rea & Weiner, 1998), however, there was increasing attention to the importance of 'standards'. The discourse of standards was closely linked to the right's discourse which linked economic and social decline to public education (Kenway, Bigum, & Fitzclarence, 1993). Alongside these changes, EDWA embarked on the development and implementation of literacy training projects (*First Steps* and *Stepping Out*) for both primary and secondary

teachers.

The introduction of service agreements, school development planning, and 'client focus' brought Western Australian government schools into alignment with other government agencies and the shift towards marketisation (Whitty, 1997b). Terms such as 'Outsourcing, Total Quality Management, choice, flexibility, performance indicators, accountability and value added' all found their way into the educational discourse in WA. Corresponding to these initiatives, a number of outside educational 'experts' such as Fullan and Hargreaves, Caldwell and Spinks were invited guests to Western Australian principals' conferences. These 'experts' were advancing the virtues of *The Self-Managing School* (Caldwell & Spinks, 1988). They focussed on matters relating to 'the new way' of educational management, suggesting that collaboration, teamwork, collegiality and community involvement were the new pillars of school change. EDWA rapidly adopted the rhetoric of this new managerialism and, as a large part of the data for this study indicates, used BCC as a focus for advancing the devolution agenda and initiating changes to work practices, community participation and pedagogical arrangements in lower secondary years.

The implementation of these policies meant that there were major changes to operations and structures to facilitate the building of new schools. The ideological shift from solely public sector management for building schools to private outsourcing was significant. For BCC, EDWA negotiated with the State-managed Building Management Authority (BMA) for the building of the first stages of BCC and later, private contractors including architects and builders tendered for the design and construction of the school. Responsibilities for purchasing of resources, brokerage of services and management of buildings and facilities were all to be devolved to the local school level. The opening of BCC was on the cusp of the coming together of these reform initiatives.

The Hoffman Report

The Hoffman Report, Devolution of Decision-making Authority in the Government school System of Western Australia, (Hoffman, 1994) was completed in December 1994 after an extensive survey of schools and the community, including the SSTUWA, with respect to the issue of devolution of educational decision making. The report contained twenty-five recommendations that related to a wide range of areas of education in WA.

Specifically, the recommendations made reference to governance, curriculum, performance management, school budgets, school organisation, staff selection, school review and financial management and accountability (Hoffman, 1994: ix-xv). Underpinning each of the recommendations were the broad principles of devolution, coupled with a stronger emphasis on centralised monitoring and control. Many of the recommendations in the Hoffman Report (ibid.) were already on EDWA's agenda for change and for implementation at BCC.

2.4 Changing Political Contexts at Ballajura

In 1992, at the time of planning BCC, a State Labor government was in power. By January 1993 a Liberal (Conservative) government replaced the Labor government. Ballajura was a rapidly expanding suburb in the Perth northern metropolitan area, and was scheduled to be given its own electoral status with a new parliamentary seat in the 1996 State elections. Competition was fierce between major political parties in the parliamentary term between 1993 and 1996 and BCC was at the centre of much of this lobbying. The Liberal candidate subsequently won the seat by 47 votes on a recount in the 1996 elections.

Lobbying by the parents to EDWA and parliamentary candidates for assurances on the commitment of resources, particularly the school buildings resulted in the school being a major focus in the election campaigns of 1993. The interest continued throughout the early stages of the operation of the school and culminated with the government launching its education policy from the BCC technology centre in February 1996. The lead up to the election of 1996, at which time the parliamentary seat was to be contested for the first time, resulted in unrivalled attention at BCC, by both the Labor and Liberal candidates seeking to win the seat.

Ballajura Community College

The population of Ballajura, a burgeoning new suburb situated approximately fifteen kilometres from the centre of Perth city had grown significantly, and the three feeder primary schools and nearby high schools were experiencing overcrowding. In response to this population pressure, the EDWA proposed the building of a new secondary school.

In 1992, EDWA established a Steering Committee comprised of members of the community, EDWA policy makers, parents of students in local primary schools and representatives from local and State government. Their role was to plan a new secondary school in the north metropolitan suburb of Ballajura, to open at the beginning of the 1995 school year. For the new community of Ballajura, a great deal of hope was pinned on the building of the school, as they saw this as the 'coming of age' of the community (Larsen, 1996). For the Education Department, BCC, along with another new secondary school in the south metropolitan region (Warnbro Community High School), was to be an exemplar school 'for the twenty-first century'.

Genesis of the Middle School Concept at BCC

By 1992, enrolments at the three feeder primary schools had expanded beyond expected numbers and a fourth new primary school, South Ballajura, was expected to reach a population of 800 students within three years. The school buildings in the neighbouring high schools were rapidly being supplemented by a burgeoning number of transportable classrooms and the pressure on EDWA to 'solve the crowding problem' posed a significant planning problem. At the time of opening BCC, a zoning criterion was applied to enrolments. This meant that all students, within a given location, had **automatic** access to the local school. In the event that numbers expanded beyond expectation, as was typically the situation in new-growth suburbs, transportable classrooms were used. In some schools in high growth areas, it was not uncommon to have up to twenty transportable classrooms supplementing permanent buildings for periods of up to ten years.

In one of the early consultative meetings with parents in one of the BCC feeder primary schools it was suggested by a parent that EDWA consider that BCC be built as the State's first *Middle School* (EDWA PO 2). The EDWA Project Officer co-ordinating the consultation process had been involved in extensive research about middle schools both within and outside Australia. He seized on the opportunity to encourage the idea and provided educational reasons to support the move. This marked a significant transition for the school. The idea of building the school as the State's first Middle School was seeded. However, as I indicate in the analytical chapters, there was not uniform support from either senior policy makers within EDWA, or from the parents.

Whilst the inclusion of Year Seven students in a secondary setting would reduce social and economic pressure on the State government to build another neighbourhood primary school, there were major regulative and operational structures which had to be addressed. These related to the significant disparities between the employment conditions of primary and secondary teachers, the levying of fees⁵ and the curriculum.

The initiative to develop a middle school that incorporated year seven students required EDWA to undertake an intensive period of consultation with parents, students, staff and principals in the local primary and secondary schools, in order to secure endorsement of the concept. With approximately sixty percent of parents supporting the final recommendation, albeit with some degree of uncertainty, EDWA adopted the final proposal and detailed planning then commenced. On the ground level, EDWA profiled the school as a 'middle school' in order to enrol year seven students from neighbourhood primary schools. In the chapters to follow, the interview data suggests that whilst EDWA Project Officers articulated strong educational reasons for the decision to adopt a 'middle school' concept in Ballajura, at more senior levels within EDWA there were tensions and uncertainty.

The endorsement of the 'middle school' project was tentative, the strategic planning uncertain and the rationale and the vision for the school varied. Paradoxically, the cost-effective solution of including Year Sevens in the high school setting under the banner of 'middle schooling' later became a major source of concern for EDWA, a point that is addressed more thoroughly in Chapter six. The apparent accidental proposal for BCC to be a middle school indicates that the policy was not one that arose from formal strategic planning at the central level. In the 1993-1994 EDWA Annual Report (EDWA, 1994) the school was clearly intended as a 'high school', with no mention of middle schooling. The initiative was, from its very beginning, controversial with key agents often espousing contradictory views on the rationale for the project.

⁵ At the time of opening BCC, voluntary fees were levied for all government students. Primary students were charged a maximum of \$9 and lower secondary students a maximum of \$215. Compulsory fees for secondary students have since been endorsed in legislation.

2.5 EDWA's Broad Reform Agenda at the Time of Opening BCC

The opening of two new secondary schools, including BCC, for the start of the 1995 school year, provided the opportunity for EDWA to advance the devolution agenda through changes, including:

- Site-based merit selection of principals and teachers, with salary reviews linked to performance for principals;
- The introduction of tenured appointments for teachers and school principals;
- Implementation of 'middle schooling' as a distinct phase of schooling in WA;
- Changes to secondary school buildings with expanded access and participation by the community;
- Implementation of an 'outcomes-based' curriculum, and
- Further devolution of responsibilities for site-based management, although salaries were not at the time, included in the total school grant.

The conjunction of circumstances including the release of Better Schools, the trialling of an outcomes based curriculum and new attention on *Middle Schooling* through National Reports such as In The Middle (NBEET, 1993) sharpened the focus on WA secondary school development. As a result, EDWA *Buildings and Facilities Branch* sought to reflect these policies in their planning and used BCC and Warnbro Community High schools, as sites for testing modifications and improvements in the site planning and architecture of secondary school buildings and facilities and greater participation and utilisation of school facilities by the community.

2.6 Personal Context

In response to the new staff selection procedures, my appointment as principal to BCC was immediately contentious. Shortly after the announcement, the SSTUWA took EDWA to the Industrial Commission to dispute the conditions of appointments for the principals of the two new secondary schools. Despite having commenced work on the establishment of the school, within weeks of the appointment EDWA Senior Officers

made it clear that there was likelihood that EDWA may lose the case against the SSTUWA. This would then require that the principals' positions for the two new schools be re-advertised.

The particular point of contestation was the definition of the principalship with site-based, limited term tenure, with salary increases and reappointment being contingent upon performance. This was an important shift in the conditions of employment for principals in WA, who, up until that time, had been appointed through a process of merit and seniority and had automatic salary increments that were **not** tied to performance review. At this stage in Western Australia's education history, the prevailing practice was: 'once a principal, always a principal', unless the highly unlikely pathway of 'voluntary retrogression' was chosen or in the event of 'gross misconduct'.⁶

2.7 State School Teachers' Union Response to Systemic Change

The State School Teachers' Union of WA (SSTUWA) has had a long history of involvement in the State's education system and has been a powerful influence on policy directions and adoption of change and innovation. In the ten year period 1985 - 1995 there had been extended opposition to many of the reforms EDWA proposed, including reforms derived from both the Beazley (1984) and Better Schools (Ministry of Education, 1987) Reports. Industrial action resulted in 'work to rule' and strikes being used in 1989 as tactics for securing improved conditions and resisting some of the proposed changes. Opposition to public sector restructuring and changes to employment policies were major concerns of the SSTUWA in 1994/1995 and resulted in 'some of the largest demonstrations in Australia since the troubled days of the Vietnam War' (Robertson, 1996: 43).

Concurrent with the action in the Industrial Commission, the SSTUWA embarked on a strong public campaign against the initiatives proposed for Ballajura and Warnbro. The union newspaper *The Western Teacher* frequently carried articles against the initiatives, naming the schools and indicating a clear message that teachers who chose to work there would be eroding conditions of all West Australian teachers.

⁶ In 1999 at the time of writing this thesis, the Minister took the unprecedented action of demoting a secondary school principal to the status of Deputy Principal, for failing to follow instructions.

In response to the SSTUWA's appeal against the new principal appointments, EDWA senior officers approached myself and the principal of Warnbro Community High School, to negotiate a *Workplace Agreement*. Whilst there were no such agreements in place for any other EDWA employees at the time, EDWA officers considered this a way out of the Industrial Commission. The signing of a *Workplace Agreement* meant that employees were not subsequently under the jurisdiction of the Industrial Commission, and meant that such an Agreement was between the employee and employer. The intent of the legislation was technically to allow employees to negotiate for improved conditions and greater pay flexibility for recognition of improved productivity.

Despite the possibility of losing our posts, we both chose not to enter into a *Workplace Agreement* and weathered the storm of uncertainty surrounding our appointments. The outcome resulted in the SSTUWA winning the appeal, and the original appointments being upheld with all traditional entitlements associated with principal class 6 being awarded. This conflict was the first of many to come. This issue is explored in more detail in Chapter seven, where I address the impact of new recruitment practices on the establishment of BCC.

At a subtler, but no less formidable level, there was overt hostility and resentment displayed towards my colleague, the Principal of Warnbro Community High School and myself. This hostility was in response to the changing conditions of appointments for secondary school principals. There was a general feeling from several fellow principals, some EDWA officers and some teachers, that we just 'hadn't done our apprenticeships'.

The traditional apprenticeship involved progressing through the incremental steps from teacher, to Head of Department, to Deputy and finally to Principal. These promotional positions typically involved several extended periods in country locations. My unconventional career trajectory, including fourteen years teaching in a variety of rural and metropolitan primary schools, school development consultant, literacy project manager and vice principal of the School of Isolated and Distance Education, and merit appointment to a desirable metropolitan school was a visible source of tension.

This tension played itself out in a variety of forms, although the most obvious forms included 'cold shouldering' at principals' meetings and a range of comments and remarks about our backgrounds and skills, relevant to the role of principal. Certainly, in

initial meetings and gatherings there was always a degree of 'face-work' (Goffman, 1999) required in response to such 'incidents' (ibid.). I often struggled with responses, and resorted to alternatives such as 'tactful overlooking' (as in the following vignette) and sometimes 'belittling modesty' (ibid.). The dilemmas I experienced at the personal level reflected the very real tensions being experienced at the micro and macro levels in the implementation of the establishment of BCC.

Vignette 2-1

My first secondary principals' meeting. We milled around and a number of people congratulated me on my appointment. I was nervous and uncertain of how people would respond. Many of the principals were encouraging and supportive, offering assistance and advice. For some, there seemed a real excitement that Ballajura will offer a chance for some significant improvements to lower secondary. There were many questions that I was unable to answer - I simply haven't got a full picture of the task, particularly the operational issues relating to including year seven students in the high school setting. There were a number of 'incidents' though, that left me feeling insecure about my position. A senior male principal quite openly indicated that I had been 'lucky' to get the job **and** the scholarship and that I'd 'obviously done the right thing by someone in the Ministry'. I was unsure of how to respond, being aware of the obvious innuendo. After a momentary lull, I responded with a benign 'yes I am lucky' and walked away.

(Larsen, Personal journal, undated, circa October, 1994)

2.8 Conclusion

In my description of the context of Western Australia, I have drawn attention to the multiple policy agendas, formal reports and 'change projects' that were directed at change and innovation in the ten-year period prior to the establishment of BCC. Clearly, the State of Western Australia was undergoing radical change and policies relating to employment of principals and teachers, curriculum and the design of secondary education were firmly on the EDWA's change agenda. Parallel to these, devolution and public accountability penetrated the educational domain, resulting in the production of new signs, new texts and new visions for education. It was clear from the outset, that BCC was to be a testing ground for many of these new visions, and as such, would be highly scrutinised both at the central and local levels. In such a climate of change, contestations were inevitable and many of the contestations referred to above, form the central part of this study.

For BCC, the opening of the school occurred on the cusp of radical changes in the State. This meant that at the school level, there was a high degree of uncertainty and tension associated with planning and implementing policies. Making new meanings of secondary schooling at BCC was intimately connected to the meanings being constructed and contested in the broader social, political and educational contexts. Mediating and transforming the multitude of 'change' texts to materialise a new school was both enabling and restrictive. I will now turn my attention to chapter three, where I provide a more detailed explanation of BCC.

Chapter Three

Mediating Central Policies at the School Level

3.1 Introduction

The chapter provides information on how EDWA policies were mediated in order to operationalise BCC. At this stage I do not theorise the process of policy making at the school level. Rather, I provide the information as further contextual information. I describe the process of establishing the school through autobiographical narrative, highlighting the precariousness of implementing change and innovation, against the shifting social, political and educational policies. The chapter also details some of the more important historical antecedents that impacted on the establishment of BCC.

3.2 Imagining the School for the Twenty-First Century

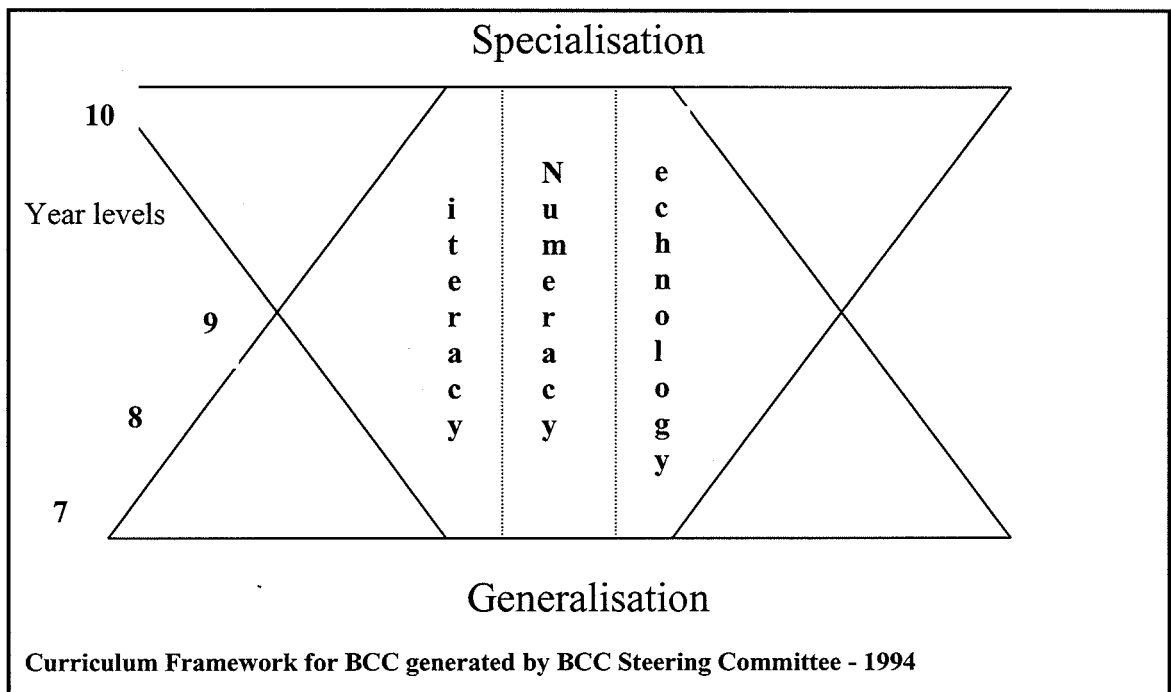
In this section I outline the initial planning that was undertaken in operationalising BCC. The following figure provides a chronology of key events.

Fig. 3-1 Timeline of Planning Events

	1992 - EDWA convened a <i>Steering Committee</i> under the title of <i>The Ballajura Project</i> . EDWA collaborating on the development of Outcome Statements at the National Level - some Western Australian schools engaged in trialling of the Outcome Statements
	July 1994 - Appointment of BCC Principal
	August 1994 - SSTUWA challenges the conditions of appointment for principals at BCC and Warnbro Community High School
	September 1994 - Principal convened BCC <i>Think Tank</i> - A group comprised of EDWA officers, university staff and local school and community representatives, some of who had participated in the <i>Steering Committee</i> .
	October 1994 - Appointment of Deputy Principals who participated in all future planning, staff recruitment and liaison with local schools and the Ballajura community.
	January 29 1995 - BCC opened with 650 (200 more than anticipated by EDWA) year seven and eight students and thirty-five staff.

The BCC Steering Committee met ten times in the period between 7th May 1992 and July 1994. During this time, members of the Committee met with local school communities and canvassed ideas regarding the preferred organisational structure for BCC through a questionnaire. They also lobbied local government for collaborative funding for sporting and recreational facilities. Whilst the Steering Committee did not have specific brief to design the curriculum for the school, they devised a model that emphasised a general comprehensive curriculum in the lower year levels with increasing specialisation occurring as students moved towards post-compulsory year levels. The figure below, prepared by the Steering Committee indicates the importance of literacy, numeracy and technology for all year levels, and the move from generalisation to specialisation as students progressed through the year levels.

Figure 3-2: Curriculum Framework for BCC



By 1994, the Steering Committee had completed its role in participating in planning the buildings and organisation for BCC. The final task undertaken by the Steering Committee was the participation in the selection of the school principal. In July 1994, EDWA convened a panel for the selection of the Foundation Principal, and took the unprecedented step of including one representative from the Steering Committee on the selection panel. It was at this stage, that I became involved with the school.

My appointment to BCC in July 1994 was one of the most demanding roles of my professional career. I was given the brief of creating a 'new school for the twenty first century'. I was one person without staff. For the first time in WA staff recruitment was to be the responsibility of the principal. However, other than the positions of Deputy Heads, appointments to the school were not effected until the opening of the new school year, in January 1995.

A research trip to the Eastern States of Australia in the first few weeks funded by EDWA, provided a starting point for clarifying many of the issues with which I was struggling. A colleague, who had been appointed to open a new school, Warnbro Community High School, in the southern metropolitan area accompanied me, and together we visited secondary schools in a number of Australian States. We became aware that many secondary schools were grappling with similar issues associated with the restrictive nature of the traditional faculty organisation in lower secondary levels. We also noted that some schools were implementing strategies that emphasised the use of technology; others emphasised innovative buildings with flexible team arrangements to respond to young adolescents as they made the transition from primary to secondary schooling. During these visits my colleague and I noted that secondary schools were often utilising single strategies to respond to pressures for changes in the lower secondary years. By contrast, I hoped to develop the school in a way that incorporated many of the initiatives that had been observed in individual schools and also raised in the literature relating to Middle Schooling.

On our return from the research tour, I convened a *Think Tank* (Larsen, 1996) to build on the work of the Steering Committee and to formulate a strategic plan for BCC. The *Think Tank* was comprised of university staff, EDWA colleagues and members of the community. Over a period of weeks, we thrashed out the critical issues that dealt with

strategies for realising 'the school of the twenty first century'. The most pressing concern was how best to meet the needs of students against the backdrop of EDWA's major new policy priorities of middle schooling, integrated curriculum and community participation. Some of the questions the *Think Tank* dealt with included: what does a new and innovative secondary school for the twenty-first century look like? What form would the buildings take? How could the curriculum be structured differently to address a more student-centred focus? What kind of teachers would be employed? How would the priorities identified by the Steering Committee - technology, literacy and numeracy feature? More importantly, what would the 'vision', the 'ethos' of a new school for the twenty first century be? In addressing these issues, the *Think Tank* drew on ideas proposed by the Steering Committee and published research, to assist in the strategic planning of the school.

Vignette 3-1

Can BCC really be a school that is different and exciting with new opportunities for young people? I have been scouring the educational literature looking for alternative ways of structuring the school. I have just read Beare and Slaughter's (1993) book *Education for The Twenty-First Century*. What impressed me most about the book was the focus on teachers and students working together to view the future positively. In thinking about a school for the twenty first century, it seems to me that the central concern must be on changing the way students and teachers engage with learning.

I have been thinking about the strong orientation that Beare and Slaughter (1993) have towards positive visions of the future. Their ideals resonate with many of the ideas that I hold for the school. They suggest ten deliberate steps that teachers and parents can take to support young people to adopt a 'futures perspective'. Each of the ten steps is directed at supporting the development of children to build on positive

relationships, with themselves, with others and within their environment. The authors suggest a values framework which centres on a moral and ethical approach to teaching, pays particular attention to the importance of cultivating positive outlooks and relationships and of providing opportunities to celebrate. There are many parallels to the literature on middle schooling, which emphasise the importance of recognising and responding to the unique needs of adolescents.

(Larsen, Personal journal, 15th August, 1994)

Background Research Informing the Focus on Adolescents

In Australia, in the early 1990s there was a growing body of research related to middle schooling (Cumming, 1994; Eysers, Cormack, & Barrat, 1992; Hopkins, Ainscow, & West, 1994; NBEET, 1993). Much of this literature urged schools to be more responsive to the needs of adolescents and also to address issues of alienation in young people. Cumming, for example claimed that:

(F)or a significant number of adolescents the curriculum lacks relevance and cohesion; teaching practices are alienating or simply boring; and organisational structures and procedures are rigid and disempowering. A recent national study of disadvantaged youth revealed that the majority of those surveyed "considered schooling to have been an unhappy and unproductive experience".

(Cumming, 1994:13)

Some of this research proposed that secondary school students required new organisational structures that limited the number of teachers and engaged them in more integrated models of learning (Berkley, 1994). Other educational research addressed issues associated with the phenomenon of 'plateauing' and sometimes 'dipping' of performance levels between primary and secondary schools (Hill, 1994). In addition, there was an emphasis on the value of team structures as opposed to faculty-based organisation (Eysers et al., 1992; NBEET, 1993). In the local context of WA, the *Stepping*

Out Project (EDWA, 1990) had drawn attention to the importance of the transition period between primary and secondary schooling. The *Stepping Out Project* (ibid.) highlighted the very real constraints that the *Unit Curriculum* imposed on students and teachers, particularly with respect to the pressures of 'getting through the curriculum'. A significant component of the whole-school literacy training addressed the need to restructure the curriculum in years 8-10 and to address concerns relating to literacy performance levels in secondary schools (Hill, 1994).

In the establishment of BCC, the *Think Tank* was pro-active in addressing the multiple findings in the educational literature relating to middle schooling (Beane, 1991; Beare & Boyd, 1993; Hargreaves, 1986; Mac Iver, 1990), and the establishment of new schools (Fletcher, Caron, & Williams, 1985; Fullan, Eastabrook, Spinner, & Loubser, 1972; Gold & Miles, 1981; Smith, Dwyer, Prunty, & Kleine, 1988). We consciously used the research findings and transformed them into a vision for BCC. This influenced the design of BCC buildings and facilities, the curriculum, the school organisation, the pedagogical practices and the *Ethos* and the *Teachers' Code of Practice*.

3.3 Operationalising a Vision for BCC

For members of the *Think Tank*, the driving emphasis in the conceptualisation of BCC were the concepts of *respect* and *care* (Noddings, 1998) for students. In line with previous educational research on new schools (Fink, 1997; Hargreaves, Fullan, Wignall, Stager, & Macmillan, 1992), the *BCC Think Tank* foregrounded a student-centred (Wasley, Hampel, & Clark, 1997) focus for the school. Central to the notions of care and respect, was a commitment to dialogue (Noddings, ibid.) between teachers and students, between teachers and teachers and between the school and the community. The supposition, from a care and respect position was that teachers would be encouraged and supported to work together, to help one another, to share and celebrate successes, to reflect on their relationships within the school, to team-teach and to collaborate. As Chaskin & Rauner, (1995) suggest, 'caring concerns relationship and commitment, mutuality and reciprocity, participation, and continuity, concern for and acceptance of the other' (p. 672). The understanding was that teachers working with students at BCC would be encouraged to value diversity, provide opportunities for students to actively

contribute to the design and structure of the school, to work together, and to be honest and reflective of their practice. Whilst not wanting to impose a 'moralistic straightjacket' (Purpel & Shapiro, 1998: 387) members of the BCC *Think Tank* sought to articulate an *Ethos* and a *Teachers' Code of Practice* that would guide the school in the provision of an education for the young people of Ballajura, based on the values of social justice, social responsibility, democracy and compassion.

Curriculum planning at BCC required mediation of a range of different texts and ideological positions. At the State level, EDWA convened the Steering Committee in recognition of the policy agenda to include the community in the design of the school. The Steering Committee formulated their own 'curriculum ideal', albeit in a rudimentary way. In addition to the Steering Committee's proposal, the *Think Tank* needed to be cognisant of EDWA's curriculum plans for the school. In the advertisement for the BCC Principal's position, EDWA proposed the following description of how the Curriculum at BCC was to be organised:

Curriculum

The curriculum is intended to be innovative in nature, offering a range of curriculum areas, which, in years 11 and 12 will ultimately complement those offered by other secondary schools in the area. Consequently, it needs to be recognised at the outset that not all curriculum components are likely to be available at these schools and they may offer unique components complementing neighbouring schools. There is a further commitment to the provision of innovative teaching styles which encourage student-centred learning, and which are geared towards the development of students as whole-of-life learners. Consequently, there is a need for curriculum designs which encourage students to progress at their own pace. The design of the schools takes into account the high demand for access to relevant information technology in education.

(EDWA, 1994a)

Within the above statement there are a number of discourses at work with the suggestion that the curriculum would be 'innovative' the over-riding theme. Conflated with the idea of innovation are the proposals that the curriculum would a) complement other secondary schools in the area; b) utilise teaching styles which encouraged student-

centred learning and which encouraged 'whole of life' learning c) encourage students to progress at their own pace and d) utilize technology. In this description, 'innovation' is cast within a particular trajectory linked to the curriculum and pedagogy. Descriptors b), c) and d) prescribe specific pedagogical and organisational arrangements for BCC. Whilst these descriptors indicate a pedagogical approach there is no mention of which curriculum framework was to be used at BCC - The *Unit Curriculum* or the Draft Student Outcome Statements.

In stressing the need to offer complementary programmes, there was clearly an indication that some subjects would not be offered in the upper secondary years 11 and 12 at BCC. Underpinning this statement was a clear reference to emerging policies that stressed a 'local area approach' to the planning of schools. In response to declining enrolments in some schools and districts, EDWA was attempting to rationalise programmes and courses at individual schools, whilst encouraging a broader curriculum offering through school based specialisation. In the Ballajura area the nearest secondary school, Morley Senior High School, offered a range of post compulsory courses including specialised courses in aeronautics, Japanese and visual arts. EDWA planning officers proposed that students in the Ballajura area would select the most appropriate course and then enrol at the school of their choice.

It is clear from the above statement that EDWA was steering the design of the school and curriculum in particular directions, in line with emerging and existing policies. At the same time, EDWA had publicly invited the community to propose the type of schooling and the nature of the curriculum that they envisaged for the school. This issue is analysed more thoroughly in Chapter six, where I discuss the tensions associated with navigating the contradictory messages that were communicated to school leaders and the community with respect to curriculum.

At the same time as balancing the needs of the Steering Committee and the EDWA's curriculum statement outlined in the information pack for the Principal's position, it was necessary to plan with due consideration to EDWA's curriculum policy, which at the time was in a state of uncertainty. In the two years preceding the opening of BCC, EDWA engaged in national collaboration for the development of a National Curriculum. During this period, trialling of Outcome Statements was undertaken in WA,

and there were parallel policy contestations taking place at the State level. Trials of Outcome Statements were being conducted in a number of Western Australian schools, although at the time of planning for BCC, there was no commitment from the State government, to proceed with a full implementation of Outcome Statements.

This created extreme difficulty for the *Think Tank* because the curriculum was fundamental to the realisation of innovation and change at BCC. With no clear commitment to the Outcome Statements from the government, the BCC *Think Tank* responded to this dilemma by adopting the Draft Student Outcome Statements as the basis for the curriculum planning. Whilst members of the *Think Tank* understood the risks associated with the decision to adopt the Outcome Statements ahead of parliamentary endorsement, they believed that the Outcome Statements would offer greater flexibility for interdisciplinary modules. In addition, the *Think Tank* maintained that this decision would eliminate the need to change the curriculum if and when the Outcome Statements were endorsed.

The *Think Tank* proceeded to identify the central philosophical ideas underpinning the curriculum vision for BCC. In the process, they adopted a critical constructivist theory of learning that emphasised the importance of students' own histories, motivations, interests and actions (Taylor, 1993). Taylor's work was strongly influential in development of curriculum at BCC. He had worked with the BCC *Think Tank* in the early developmental stages of the school, and later co-ordinated and taught academic programs for Masters and Ph.D. level courses at the school. We adopted a social constructivist's perspective on learning and recognised 'that students construct their own knowledge through engaging in experiences in relation to their extant knowledge' (Taylor, *ibid.*: 4). The importance of collaborative learning models and opportunities for negotiation of the curriculum (Beane, 1991,1995; Rudduck, 1991) and the focus on literacy and learning were all fundamental aspects in the design of the curriculum. The *Think Tank* proposed a curriculum model that linked subjects in integrated modules that were intended to provide scope for extended periods for in-depth and co-operative projects and also emphasised the on-going and explicit teaching of literacy in the lower secondary year levels. Fundamental to the design of the curriculum was an emphasis on *how* students would participate in the everyday experience of schooling. It was a vision

that imagined students actively participating in all aspects of their schooling, making decisions, and being excited by learning. To this end, the *Think Tank* proposed an integrated curriculum in the lower secondary years, much the same as the integrated humanities projects that were established in England in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Whitty, 1985).

It was necessary to have a number of examples of *Integrated Modules* for staff to use at the commencement of the 1995 school year. This became an essential priority once the two deputies were appointed in October of 1994. The senior management team undertook an intensive review of the Draft Outcome Statements, in order to establish the viability of designing a curriculum based on the models proposed by the *Steering Committee* and the *Think Tank*. The modules needed to be rigorous and transparent with opportunities for explicit teaching of literacy, numeracy and technology, within each. The emphasis on these skills, meant that the *processes* of learning became a central part of the curriculum planning. Together, the senior management team designed the first of the modules – *Our Community* and *The Ancient World*. These formed the basis for a large part of the curriculum in the years 7-8 for the first term⁷ of 1995.

The senior management team knew that in the 'ideal setting' teachers should be actively engaged in this school level curriculum process. However, the very fact that staff were not appointed until the first day of the 1996 school year required the senior management team to create a clear curriculum framework with schemes of work and appropriate curriculum resources for the commencement of the school year. The initial modules provided a template for initial planning, purchasing of resources and recruitment of teachers. It was envisaged that teachers and teams would modify and adapt the modules according to their own areas of expertise and more particularly, the needs of the students.

Themes and Issues – The question of content and processes

The design of the modules raised many epistemological and social justice issues. Questions relating to how specific content knowledge was to be embedded into the

⁷ The school year (43 weeks) is broken into four terms of approximately 10-11 weeks duration.

modules, assessment, teachers' subject knowledge and articulation between lower and upper secondary courses, were all key considerations. Working from the framework suggested by the Steering Committee, and taking note of the recommendations of the *Think Tank*, the senior management team adopted a system of *Curriculum Connectivity* (Young, 1998), linking the outcomes from a range of subjects into modules, with literacy, numeracy and technology central foci. The BCC curriculum and organisation ensured that year seven and eight teams had a greater focus on *integrated curriculum*. Curriculum outcomes were matched to modules according to relevance to the theme, and programmes were designed to reflect these connections. In years nine and ten there was to be a move to *interdisciplinary teaching* (Wasley, 1994) in recognition of the importance of preparing students for the formal external examinations at year twelve with an increasing emphasis on specialisation. Teams were organised to allow teachers to maintain their discipline base, but to work in smaller groups, to ensure continuity and closer contact with their students.

Much of the early curriculum development at BCC focussed on ensuring that where appropriate, learning areas were integrated in the design of the modules. The links could not just be semantic: subject outcomes needed to be addressed explicitly. At the same time, Young's point of allowing sufficient flexibility to allow students' input into shaping the curriculum, was also a focus. Some teams later used this flexibility to engage students in the process of designing the modules and to have input into the design of the middle school curriculum (Beane, 1991; Rudduck, 1991).

Modules were designed with a focus on flexibility, in order to respond to differentiated abilities. At the same time due attention was given to the outcomes in specific learning areas. The model demanded an approach to subject knowledge that was not an end in itself (Young, op.cit.) but rather, a means to linking the specific to the general, with a foregrounding of processes of literacy, numeracy and technology.

Contestation Surrounding Integration versus Specialisation – Mathematics and Science

The senior management team recruited teachers according to their individual areas of expertise and their interest in participating in the development of alternative models of curriculum delivery for adolescents. Teams of five or six teachers were organised to

ensure representation of the full range of learning areas. Team-planning time, equivalent to one day per week was timetabled to allow for collaboration and planning. Mathematics and Science proved to be problematic because teachers' levels of expertise and confidence were variable.

Vignette 3-2

In the last week three teachers have spoken to me about the concerns they have for the curriculum. The main issue seems to be the enormous demands being placed on teachers to understand the full range of learning areas. There are also real concerns being raised about the breadth of curriculum knowledge required by the teachers. One teacher reported:

'I really lack the confidence with science. I was trained in the social sciences and my knowledge of science is only what I learned at school. I was all right with the biological science topic, but when it came to specialised knowledge around physics and chemistry, I was way out of my depth. I am concerned that the students just aren't getting the best support in these areas'.

I am not sure how to address these problems. I have spoken to (X) and (Y), (the Deputies) about these concerns, and we will ask the teachers how they think we should address the issues.

(Larsen, Personal journal, 01 August, 1995)

Initially, all teachers had the responsibility for these subjects, with the *Subject Leaders* devising programs and mentoring teachers at the team meetings, on how best to teach the content. After a short period however it became evident that some teachers lacked the necessary confidence and skills in mathematics and science and a greater level of specialist teaching was employed in these learning areas. A number of teams introduced partner teaching and others, rotational programs, where the teacher with expertise in mathematics and science taught these subjects. Integration of these two

subjects was still encouraged where appropriate. For example in the module on *The Ancient World*, teachers focussed on the development of numerical systems and geometry.

The process of formulating and developing a curriculum model at BCC involved balancing multiple agendas in uncertain circumstances. In 1995 the first year of operation at BCC, all the staff at the school became actively involved in trialling the Draft Student Outcome Statements, which often led to redrafting and reformulating the curriculum modules.

Assessment – Introducing Portfolios as the Basis for Assessment

In WA, there is no public examination such as the GCSE at the end of the compulsory years (year 10). A *Certificate of Secondary Education* is awarded to students at the completion of year 10 and this is entirely school-based. This means that there is scope for greater curriculum flexibility in lower secondary, than in England, where GCSE performance becomes the benchmark for teaching and learning in the lower-secondary levels (Elwood, 1998).

During the planning period, the *Think Tank* reviewed literature relating to Middle Schooling, and Portfolio Assessment. Research on alternative methods of assessment indicated that portfolios can provide students, teachers and parents with rich sources of information regarding student achievement (Marsh, 1997: 75). They also encourage students to take responsibility for their learning (Darling-Hammond, Aness, & Falk, 1995; Paulson, Paulson, & Meyer, 1991). Other advantages of portfolio assessment, suggested by Marsh (op.cit.) indicate that it:

- broadens the type of evidence that teachers can use in assessing students;
- encourages students to assess themselves;
- focuses teachers' instruction on student outcomes, and
- encourages teachers and principals to think systematically.

In WA, portfolio assessment had been used at varying levels and in different forms to incorporate coursework for the Tertiary Entrance Exam. However, in lower secondary levels there was only limited use of this form of assessment. At BCC, portfolio assessment was linked to the modules, and teachers structured a range of tasks to reflect

this link. Portfolios were the centrepiece for reporting, combined with student-self assessment, three-way conferences with students, teachers and parents and rating of performance using *Outcome Levels* at the end of the year. Each of the four terms culminated with the presentation of portfolios, with teacher reports being included at the end of terms two and four.

Portfolio assessment was introduced in the first year of BCC against a backdrop of uncertainty. There were very few examples to draw from across the State and little or no mention of portfolio assessment in the educational discourse of WA. The rationale for using portfolios was:

- To provide students the opportunity to demonstrate learning in a range of subject areas, including literacy, numeracy and technology and through a range of media and artefacts.
- To provide parents with the opportunity to view a range of samples of students' work, including work in draft, redraft and completed forms, in relation to broader benchmarks, such as the Student Outcomes.
- To provide parents and students with samples of work related to their progress in the range of curriculum areas.

The process of implementing portfolios and Outcome Statements was difficult. There were continual debates and meetings about what should be in the portfolios, the place of 'formal tests' and moderated assessments. There were also questions relating to the scope for including artefacts such as videos, photographs and other design media and the importance of students' and parents' input and feedback, which all needed to be addressed.

Introducing portfolios as a major component of the *Reporting and Assessment Policy* at BCC focussed students, teachers and parents on new ways of thinking about teaching and learning, and new forms for representing student achievement. Whereas the *Unit Curriculum* had an emphasis on assessment against grade related descriptors, at BCC we were keen to incorporate opportunities that facilitated interpretation and meaning making, rather than focussing exclusively on rote learning of subject specific knowledge. Certainly the composite package, including work samples, student self-

assessment, teacher assessment and interviews with parents provided extensive information on students' progress.

Central to many of the early debates were issues relating to the control that students could/would take in structuring their portfolio. What level of flexibility would be allowed? To what extent would teachers influence the selection of work to be included? Should there be 'exemplars', 'drafts' or samples of 'everyday' work within the portfolios? How would the portfolios be used to report students' progress against the Outcome Statements that were in unfinalised and uncertain state?

The debates on portfolios, like those around the implementation of the integrated curriculum were firmly rooted in 'ideological dilemmas' (Billig et al., 1988). The transformation of the 'idealised' model, one where students had control of their learning and were actively engaged in the processes of selecting individual work samples for their portfolios was far more difficult in its practical implementation. Competing ideological positions - those relating to 'student-centred' versus 'traditional' models gave rise to fundamental questions relating to the value of content knowledge, the subject traditions, the demands of the formal curriculum and the need to 'prepare' students for State level examinations at year twelve level. There were ongoing contestations arising from these ideological dilemmas, which continued to impact on the adoption of change and innovation at BCC. Many of these dilemmas arose from teachers' own values and histories, which influenced their interpretations of the BCC *Ethos* and *Teachers Code of Practice* and also their own epistemological and pedagogical values and histories.

3.3.1 Staffing at BCC

Whilst EDWA had nominally titled BCC as a '*Middle School*', the recruitment of primary and secondary teachers was problematic. I take this point up further in Chapter seven, where I discuss data relating to changes to employment practices. For now however, I provide a background of the rationale proposed by the *Think Tank*, for including both primary and secondary teachers in the staffing profile for BCC.

The central motivation for including primary teachers in the staffing profile of BCC was to bridge the pedagogical gap between primary and secondary stages of schooling. One of the critical differences between primary and secondary teachers is primary teachers' ability to focus holistically on students, rather than seeing subject

content as an end in itself. Nias and her colleagues suggest that the primary school culture tends to foster collaborative work practices that focus on team work, which 'arises from and embodies a set of social and moral beliefs about desirable relationships between individuals and the communities of which they are part, and not from a belief about epistemology and pedagogy' (Nias, Southworth, & Yeomans, 1989 :73). Western Australian primary teachers also typically have a stronger training in literacy, which was a key priority at BCC.

There was however, a strong belief that primary teachers would benefit from secondary teachers' subject expertise, particularly in areas such as mathematics and science. Secondary teachers could support primary teachers with non-specialist knowledge by providing them with a fund of 'pedagogical content knowledge' (Geeland, 1997) through team teaching and collaborative planning.

The goal of the senior management team at BCC was to draw on the expertise of both primary and secondary teachers in order that they could work as *connective specialists* (Young, 1998: 60). Primary teachers brought knowledge of integration, literacy and developmental learning, and secondary teachers their subject knowledge. At BCC, organisational structures supported collaborative and teamwork arrangements that specifically targeted the sharing of knowledge and skills between teachers. There was a continued focus on involving students in a broad range of activities that reflected a commitment to care and respect. In my leadership I endeavoured to reflect this ethic of care and respect.

Vignette 3-3

Today the students and teachers from Yellow Team used the abseiling loft in the gymnasium for the first time. The students asked me to join them and suggested that I be the first teacher to scale the gymnasium wall. I am petrified of heights and have never contemplated doing abseiling. At recess, a number of students arrived at my office with a school track-suit for me to wear, and promised to return at 11, the scheduled time for

the activity. I fumbled for excuses hoping that 'an urgent crisis' would arise.

At 11 o'clock, the students arrived, brimming with excitement. The gymnasium was crowded with students who cheered spontaneously as I entered. At that stage I was filled with fear. I simply could not climb the ladder - I was numb. There was much encouragement from the students and one of the boys took my hand and led me to the ladder. There was hushed silence as I moved, tentatively, cautiously up every step, my heart pounding. At the top I placed the harness on and listened to the advice of the instructors. I was convinced that I would have to climb back down the ladder. I simply could not take the first step to go over the platform. At that very moment, Angela, a fully blind student yelled - 'come on Mrs. Larsen, you can do it, it's not very high'. In one flash, I thought of Angela - joyful, responsive and willing to try anything despite her disability. I edged backwards and gently eased the rope through the harness. In a few seconds I was on the ground, feeling exhilarated, surrounded by students who were so genuinely thrilled that I had 'made it'. I spent the rest of the morning encouraging and coaxing students as they too 'went over the edge'.

(Larsen, Personal journal, October, 1995)

The emphasis on care and support for students was also central to the staffing profile, and by the end of 1996, there was a full-time nurse, a part-time Chaplain, student support officer and educational psychologist at the school. These staff provided essential support to students and also provided educational programmes (adolescent health, drugs education) and pastoral care and links to the community.

Rather than the traditional role of Head of Department, the school implemented a model of Team Leaders who provided both curriculum and pedagogical leadership and

pastoral care for students and teachers within a team. Team Leaders were recruited on the basis that they had depth of curriculum knowledge in a specialist field, as well as broader leadership skills.

Timetabling for Collaborative Meetings for Teachers

The senior management team structured the timetable to ensure that each team had at least half a day per week to meet and work collaboratively. Under the industrial agreements for government teachers in WA, secondary teachers were entitled to the equivalent of one-day non-contact per week, and primary teachers, 160 minutes. Industrially, teachers in WA could not be asked to 'cover' during this time, although at BCC, collaborative meetings were an essential focus for team planning and professional development and were mandated at the school level. I negotiated with EDWA for primary teachers to be allocated the same non-contact⁸ time given to secondary teachers. The issue of additional funding required for this non-contact time was however, extremely contentious and is explored further in Chapter six.

When teaching teams met, students participated in programmes taught by specialist teachers in The Arts, Technology and LOTE (Languages Other Than English). While specialist teachers worked separately from the teaching teams, where possible, they linked their programmes to module themes. For example, when studying the module of *The Ancient World* students participated in a variety of art, design and technology activities, that were both complementary and enriching of their studies in the core subject areas.

Vignette 3-3

The students in Red Team have been working on the module 'The Ancient World' and invited me to visit their team to look at their work. I looked at my watch and suddenly realised I was late and dashed passed Arlene, telling her where I was going. I arrived and there was a hive of activity. Some students were

⁸ Non-contact time in WA is referred to as DOTT time: the acronym stands for 'Duties Other Than Teaching'.

working in groups preparing for their module presentations. One group was building an Egyptian irrigation system, making reference to designs they had created on the computer. Another group of students was building a pyramid using a CD ROM to 'walk through' a pyramid as a point of reference. Yet another group was video recording interviews with 'Ancient Egyptians' on different aspects of their life. There were students dressed in costume with an assortment of artefacts including sarcophagi, pottery, jewellery and food, all hand made in the course of the project. Students had worked on these projects for a number of weeks, writing, reading, visiting museums, accessing data from the internet and CD-ROMs and making models using a variety of different media. I could tell they were excited about their learning - there was an enthusiasm and interest in the projects and the quality of the work reflected this interest. When I questioned them about their models, they had extensive knowledge of the social studies content, and many responded enthusiastically with 'Did you know' questions - e.g. 'did you know Mrs. Larsen that the Egyptians built tunnels in the pyramids that were aligned directly with the stars?' They had incorporated this level of knowledge into their models.

I later spoke to the teachers about the students' engagement with the work. They were enthusiastic about the project, suggesting that the students had learned an enormous range of skills and knowledge, most were confident users of a range of media and the links with the Arts and Technology teams had resulted

in the presentation of outstanding work. I reflected on some of the lessons I had watched when leading *Stepping Out*, and knew that despite the uncertain pathway we are taking, this has to be a better introduction to secondary schooling.

(Larsen, Personal journal, 17th October 1995)

Subject Leadership and Team Leadership

As indicated above, BCC middle management staff were recruited with a view to linking subject leadership with team leadership. This was a significant shift from established policy in WA. Traditionally, Heads of Departments were allocated leadership roles within specific faculties. The role of team leadership was foregrounded as a key focus for the middle management team. Their expertise and experience was extensive and they were all enthusiastic about the challenges proposed. Nonetheless, the transition from 'subject specialist' to the combined role of subject and team leader created difficulties.

My previous research (Larsen, 1996) indicated that team leaders constantly struggled with their role and a number found the transition difficult:

There were so many different issues to deal with. I have gone through the process of worrying about my particular learning area as well as my team. I try and focus on solving problems through strategic thinking. I'm not naïve enough to think that everything new is going to be fine and wonderful to start with.

(Team Leader, BCC, in Larsen, 1996: 78)

For the Team Leaders, a recurring issue was the time required to support their team, and the difficulty of ensuring subject integrity across the school.

The dual role is great, very exciting but it always comes down to time. ... I found 'though that over the year when I was under pressure, if I wasn't careful I could easily lapse back into the role of HoD (Head of Department) ... especially given that I've got a team of very competent teachers.

(Team Leader, BCC, in Larsen, 1996: 79)

3.3.2 Professional Development

Professional development at BCC was a core component of curriculum planning. There were four key elements:

- Weekly Team Meetings;
- In-service training, devised and supported by teachers at the school and conducted on the six school development days;
- Teachers *Performance Management Plan*, which incorporated a component of 40 hours professional development in their own time⁹, and
- The Curtin University Links programme.

Weekly team meetings were scheduled to allow all team members at least three hours to meet together during school time. The team usually decided the focus of these meetings, although at certain times, the whole school focussed on specific aspects. For example, there were periods when literacy was the focus for the whole school and together, the literacy team devised strategies for monitoring and planning for literacy. The result was that some team meetings included the collection of students' work samples with explicit attention on how best to respond to the variable literacy needs and abilities. The *Literacy Leader* provided guidance and explicit information, training and support for integrating literacy into the modules, and modelling in classrooms. Similar strategies were adopted for other subjects, with attention to whole-school monitoring of students' achievement.

The stated purpose of the team meetings was to utilise and build on teacher expertise in order to continue to develop school-based curriculum and work towards cross school moderation of standards. However, the structuring of teams and the working relationships were not uniformly harmonious (Larsen, 1996). There were many instances where teachers' own positioning and ideologies and motivations (Datnow, 1998) resulted in conflicts. At BCC, the micropolitics of change and innovation (Ball, 1987; Fink, 1997), with all the attendant pressures of being in a new school, at times gave rise to factionalism, positioning and counter-positioning. Issues relating to establishing

⁹ At the time of opening BCC, under the 1995 Industrial Agreement, teachers were required to complete forty hours professional development in their own time. This requirement was subsequently withdrawn in the 1997 Industrial Agreement.

credibility, developing working relationships and working collaboratively, all gave rise to contestations.

In-Service Training

In 1995, EDWA funded three days in-service training for all incoming BCC staff prior to the commencement of the school year. The three days were crucial in sharing the Ethos and philosophy of the school with staff, and providing a first opportunity to develop common understandings. In subsequent years, additional funding was not provided for induction in spite of the fact that the school typically gained twenty new staff due to the rapid expansion of the school. This meant that induction policies previously put into place at the school level and supported by EDWA, were unsustainable and alternative strategies were implemented. To address this shortcoming, the senior management team organised a voluntary, optional induction for new staff on the last two days of their summer vacation. Almost without exception, teachers participated willingly and enthusiastically in the induction. Clearly EDWA recognised the importance of staff induction to sustain the initiatives at BCC. However, as is so often the case, the commitment to innovation in new schools (Fink, 1997) was constrained by resourcing limitations and the enormous pressures associated with the rapid growth in the school population.

To address the rapid rise in new teachers, a staff-mentoring programme was implemented in 1996. New staff were partnered with existing staff in order to complement the school based induction programme. In-service training was also provided on the six School Development Days (INSET), which was collaboratively planned by teachers and the school management team.

Performance Improvement

Given that all staff had been appointed to BCC on tenure, and tenure renewal was subject to 'satisfactory performance', it was necessary that a performance improvement framework be developed at the school. As Foundation Principal my position required that I mediate EDWA's policies against the ideals of the Ethos of the school.

Vignette 3-4

We all have the condition of tenure renewal subject to 'satisfactory performance'. What this means for all of us at BCC is unclear, given that there is no framework from EDWA. There is a huge range of literature relating to the topic of 'performance appraisal', much of which emphasises the punitive nature of this. I'm totally opposed to adopting such an approach because I believe that this would be undermining of the Ethos of the school. I also believe that by working in teams, teachers will have ongoing opportunities to reflect on their practice and improve their teaching as a matter of course.

After speaking with the staff, we have decided to adopt a 'performance improvement' model. This has fewer connotations of 'surveillance' and will help us to focus on areas that we wish to improve. We have developed a framework where each of us will select our own 'performance improvement team' of two colleagues, including a member of the management team. We will each focus on three areas for reflection - personal, school level and EDWA. Each team will meet three times in the year to reflect on 'performance' and discuss areas of strengths and concern. We will link the performance improvement plan with our professional development plan so that the professional development we are undertaking in our own time is directed towards these areas.

The absence of an EDWA policy means that we are really making up the school level policy as we go. The obvious questions we have are; by what criteria

would someone's performance be deemed 'unsatisfactory'; how would this be responded to? What are the implications for renewal of tenure? I don't have the answers to these questions.

Apart from the obvious difficulties in defining 'satisfactory' and 'unsatisfactory' performance I see this whole area as an industrial minefield, given the current Union hostilities towards the school.

(Larsen, Personal journal, April 4, 1995)

During 1995 a performance improvement system was formally established at BCC. Staff were encouraged to form teams of three, of their own choice, including a member of the management team. A performance management plan was individually devised, with links to personal, BCC and EDWA priorities. At the time, a requirement of the industrial agreement for teachers stipulated that all staff undertake forty hours professional development and training in their own time. This had to be incorporated into the teachers' personal performance improvement plans, and approved by the school management team. Teachers at BCC undertook a wide range of professional development and training courses. Many were participating in university courses, (including the Curtin University Links Programme discussed below); others attended professional conferences and in-service courses.

Curtin University Links Programme

A *University Links Programme* was established with Curtin University, and planning commenced for Masters and Ph.D. courses to be run at the school from the beginning of 1995. I negotiated for courses to be focussed on aspects of curriculum, pedagogy and collaborative learning, and where possible, to reflect the focus on reflective practice (Schon, 1983) and portfolio assessment.

At the time, I was completing a M.Sc. (Science Education) at the *Science and Mathematics Education Centre at Curtin University* and this provided an ideal opportunity to negotiate links. One of the staff from Curtin University, Peter Taylor, was

also a participant in the *BCC Think Tank* and this meant that he had extensive background on the development of the school. Initially fifteen teachers participated in the course. Many teachers used the school-based courses to reflect on their practice within a theoretical framework, with readings and coursework providing a focus for further reflection on practice, and discussions between teams.

3.3.3 Community Links and Outreach

BCC had an articulated policy on 'The Community' with the nomenclature being the most obvious icon of this focus. While I unpack the meaning of 'Community' more thoroughly in the analytical chapters, the focus on 'The Community' had a substantial influence on the design and implementation of the curriculum. Where possible, modules included direct links to the community and students were encouraged to participate in community projects. For example, the first module on 'The Community' involved a group of students working with the transport agency to analyse, survey and design the new bus route for the suburb of Ballajura. A student presentation to the *Transport Authority* resulted in the plan being adopted. This was one of the many projects embedded into BCC curriculum. Industry and local government links, mentoring by retirees and the community were also major initiatives at the school.

3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I provided an overview of the structures and organisation of BCC. There is no doubt that EDWA's commitment to facilitating the establishment of an alternative model of lower secondary schooling was hugely empowering and exciting at the school level. With an imprimatur to be innovative, the school leaders, teachers and the community set out to establish a secondary school that drew on the most contemporary research in order to create new meanings for secondary schooling in WA.

At the same time, BCC was part of what has traditionally been a highly centralised and regulated government school system. Many of the difficulties that were encountered in establishing the school related to the process of navigating existing and emerging policies. While the three areas of **curriculum**, **organisation** and **pedagogy** were glossed as important concerns for EDWA officers involved in the establishment of

BCC, it was the senior management team and teachers at the school who transformed the generic notion of ‘middle schooling’ into a practical reality. This required the mediation of many EDWA policies that were in a state of flux. The pressure to have the school fully operational in the space of six months gave rise to many tensions, which are analysed in the data chapters. As a large, complex bureaucracy, the many branches of EDWA (e.g. staffing, curriculum, buildings and facilities) each had a part in supporting the establishment of the school. However, each branch of the bureaucracy impacted the school in different ways as they struggled with the transition from a highly centralised system to a devolved system. While BCC represented an exciting opportunity to challenge many of the existing secondary school structures and arrangements, there was also a strong agenda to test out new policies and to advance the devolution agenda. In the following chapter I examine educational policy theory more thoroughly as a basis for the theoretical and methodological framework used in the analytical parts of the thesis.

PART TWO

Chapter Four - Policy Practices, Discourse Analysis and Social Semiotics

4.1 Introduction

In the preceding three chapters, I provided a description of BCC within the broader educational context of WA. In this chapter I discuss the theoretical and analytical parameters which I used, in order to 'backward map' (Elmore, 1985, cited in Alur, 1998: 132) the policy processes associated with the establishment of BCC. Linking the context chapters to the theory and method is important, because my original proposition was that policy making can only be theorised within the 'context of culture' and 'context of situation' (Halliday & Hasan, 1985: 11). It should be evident from the preceding chapters that change did not involve single discourses at a single site. BCC was opening at a time when a raft of new policies were evolving and senior EDWA officers and government viewed the school as a testing ground for many of these policies. This resulted in a range of emerging policies all intersecting at different stages of realisation and each, being mediated and transformed differently, in different domains.

In the first part of this chapter, I define 'policy' more thoroughly, illustrating the theoretical and methodological shifts that have occurred in educational policy research. I then review a number of policy studies that helped in framing the study through the social semiotic lens. I will then move to a more thorough description of the theoretical framework used in the analysis of the data. I include a discussion of critical discourse analysis (CDA) and social semiotics that were the methods used to examine the multifarious texts that arose within the policy contexts of establishing BCC.

4.2 Defining Policy

In Chapter one, I suggested that in the context of this thesis, policy should be viewed as a process of meaning making, through which change is contested and mediated. This definition differs from many policy researchers, and needs therefore, to be situated in the broader context of policy research. In this section, I will discuss some of the significant differences in policy research, highlighting how the term has been used to frame methodological and theoretical approaches to policy and change.

The term 'policy' is used in a variety of ways and has been analysed from a wide range of perspectives (Marshall & Peters, 1999; Taylor et al., 1997) and for different purposes (Ozga, 2000). In general, 'policy' 'refers to statements and courses of action that policy-makers and administrators intend to follow' (Codd, 1988: 237) in order to introduce change. Rational models or technical-empiricist approaches (Taylor et al., 1997) provide a range of typologies which conceptualise policy as a linear process that begins with the identification of issues or problems, development or formulation of policy through to implementation and evaluation. The technical-empiricist view of policy-making sees policy occurring in quite distinct phases with discrete policy functions for the policy researcher, the policy maker and the policy recipient (Codd, op.cit.).

For Hill, (1993) 'policy' is understood as the process of defining objectives, setting priorities, defining the plan of action and specifying the rules for implementation. Hogwood and Gunn propose a more extended model which includes the following nine stages:

- (1) Deciding to decide (issue search or agenda setting).
- (2) Deciding how to decide (or issue filtration).
- (3) Issue definition.
- (4) Forecasting.
- (5) Setting objectives and priorities.
- (6) Option analysis.
- (7) Policy implementation, monitoring and control.
- (8) Evaluation and review.
- (9) Policy maintenance, succession or termination.

(Hogwood & Gunn, 1984 : 24)

Despite the linearity of the stages of policy suggested above, Hogwood and Gunn recognise that 'policy' represents a wide range of activities. They suggest that 'policy' should be conceptualised as a 'field of activity', 'a general expression of general purpose or desired state of affairs', as 'formal authorisation', as 'a programme', as 'output' as 'outcome' as a 'theory or model' and as 'process' (Hogwood and Gunn, 1984 in Taylor *et al.*, 1997: 23). Technical-empiricist models, like those listed above, imply that educational policy-making is uncontested and relatively straightforward. Such models pay little or no attention 'to struggle and transformation in power relations and the role that language plays therein' (Fairclough, 1992). As such, many technical-empiricist studies of educational policy focus on commentary and critique rather than an examination of the exercise of political power and the language that is used to legitimate the process (Codd, 1988). Testimony to this is the large number of studies of policy implementation and evaluation, which typically see the policy process occurring in discreet phases in much the same way as those suggested above. Many of these studies assume that the language used in policy processes is quite transparent, implying settled and unequivocal 'readings' of policy texts. Many policy studies often convey 'no sense of the political struggles involved in developing and implementing policy' (Fulcher, 1989).

Increasingly, there has been an acknowledgement of the limitations of technical-empiricist approaches, and policy researchers have indicated a need for research that takes into account a more dynamic nature of educational policy-making (Ball, 1994a; Bowe et al., 1992; Fitz & Halpin, 1994 ; Maguire & Ball, 1994; Ozga, 2000; Taylor et al., 1997). Each of these researchers in different ways, problematise the tendency of viewing the stages of policy in discreet phases of formulation and implementation. Fitz and Halpin (1994) for example, argue that policy studies which focussed on 'top down' models failed to recognise the diverse range of agents who actively participated in the shaping of policy. 'Top down' models, are primarily concerned with how implementation occurred at the 'street level' (p. 54) and how different interpretations of the policy objectives occurred in the process of implementation.

Criticism of 'top down' models of policy implementation led to an increase of 'bottom up' research, which changed the object of study and the methods of enquiry (Fitz & Halpin, 1994 :54). 'Bottom up' policy studies sought to expand the data set to include 'actors, organisations and individuals 'outside' the authority structures ... [who] were assigned an active role in the process' (ibid.). Whilst 'bottom up' policy studies provided information on how the end-users of policies mediated and transformed the official policy texts, these models were also criticised for the following reasons (paraphrased from Fitz and Halpin (ibid.):

- they tended to over-emphasise the ability of the periphery to frustrate the intentions of the centre;
- they failed to acknowledge the historical antecedents, including previous policies and the influence and activities of participants in the past, and
- in focussing on the activities of the end-users of policies, they failed to attend to the 'social, legal and economic factors which structure the perceptions, resources and participation of those actors' (Sabatier, 1986: 35 cited in Fitz & Halpin, 1994).

The central concern of many contemporary policy researchers is how to avoid the artificial separation between policy formulation and implementation and also to avoid the limitations of either 'top down' or 'bottom up' approaches.

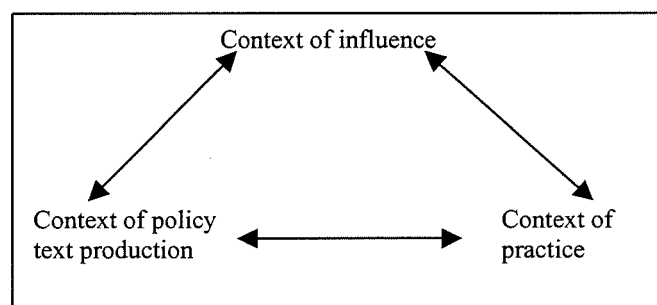
Bowe and Ball with Gold (1992) sought to address this problem by representing the policy process as a circular one, which involves the writing up and writing down of policy. That is, the process is understood to be a far more dynamic and dialogic one than that proposed by technical-empiricist models or models that dichotomise the formulation/implementation stages. Of all the 'policy models' reviewed, it was Bowe *et als'*. (ibid.) model that was most useful in representing the multiple, competing and complementary discourses that intersect in the policy process. I turn now to a discussion of their model.

4.2.1 The Processes of Policy-Making - Bowe & Ball, with Gold's Model

Bowe et al. (1992) adopt a post-structuralist approach and draw on discourse theory to illustrate that policy-making can be conceptualised as a continuous cycle which involves multiple power struggles arising from the intersection of, and contestation between, competing discourses and ideologies. For Bowe et al. (ibid.), the process of policy is far more haphazard and far more fluid than that suggested in the linear models discussed above. The authors suggest that in the implementation phase of policy, there is scope for multiple mediations and interpretations, which in turn give rise to different outcomes.

Underpinning Bowe et al.'s (ibid.) model is the view that the policy process is highly complex, is often difficult to control in terms of effects and often results in unintended and unforeseen outcomes. In theorising the process of policy-making, Bowe et al. (ibid.) provide a model of the contexts of policy-making which attempts to capture the dynamic inter-relationships between the multiple policy domains.

Figure 4-1: Bowe and Ball with Gold -Contexts of policy-making



(Bowe et al., 1992 :20)

This model, described as a 'heuristic representation' indicates three primary policy contexts, each of which consists 'of a number of arenas of action, some, public, some private' (ibid.). The *context of influence* is typically the arena in which public policy is initiated. It is within this context that different agents engage in struggles to influence the policy process, using a range of discursive formations to influence the definition and direction of educational change. The authors suggest that within the *context of influence*, key policy concepts are established through discursive practices and contestations. The

extent of influence exercised by different agents is dependent upon the outcome of the inevitable contestations that arise and the positional power of the policy actors.

Within the context of BCC, policies relating to devolution, changing employment practices, the introduction of an outcomes based curriculum, and changes to secondary school structures and buildings were all on the political agenda. Each of these policy agendas had their origins at the central or government levels or to use Bowe *et als.*' (ibid.) terminology, the 'context of influence'.

The second stage in Bowe *et als.*' (ibid.) heuristic, is the *context of policy text production*. This stage indicates a more 'settled' notion, because it is at this stage that policy is formalised into written text. However, texts, whether written or spoken, by their very nature, are open to interpretation and misinterpretation. Formal written policy documents may therefore be supplemented by 'official' commentaries, which serve to mediate the formal policy document(s), legitimising and giving currency to the discourse and lexicon. The production of the policy text does not in itself, signal the finished product because the interpretation and implementation of the policy is the stage in which individual agents engage with the policy within their own context.

The third stage in the model relates to the *context of practice* which refers to the process of implementation. It is here that multiple interpretations can result in eschewing the original intention of the policy. Teachers, principals and other agents interpret the policy through their own experiences and contexts. Bowe et al.(ibid.) suggest that within *the context of practice* agents associated with policy are actively involved in meaning making. They argue that:

(P)olicy is not simply received and implemented within [the context of practice] rather it is subject to interpretation and then 'recreated'..... Practioners do not confront policy texts as naïve readers, they come with histories, with experience, with values and purposes of their own, they have vested interests in the meaning of policy. Policies will be interpreted differently as the histories, experiences, values, purposes and interests which make up any arena differ. The simple point is that policy writers cannot control the meanings of their texts. Parts of the texts will be rejected, selected out, ignored, deliberately

misunderstood, responses may be frivolous, etc. Furthermore, yet again, interpretation is a matter of struggle. Different interpretations will be in contest, as they relate to different interests.

(Bowe et al., 1992 :21-2)

The strength of the above model lies in the acknowledgement of the complexity and the dynamic nature of the policy process. In later work Ball (1994b) acknowledges the need to incorporate into the model, two additional contexts that take account of the political aspects of policymaking, and also attend to issues of social justice. To address these concerns, Ball added the *context of outcomes* and that of *political strategy*, to the above policy cycle. The *context of outcomes* focussed on the need to address policy outcomes in terms of the goals articulated by the policy, and the social justice goals. The political strategy relates to the evaluations undertaken in respect to the two aspects of the context of outcomes.

Ball's work has been significant in educational policy research in that it has highlighted the methodological and theoretical importance of discourse in educational policy research. Ball and his colleagues' work differs significantly from technical-empiricist models in that policy is conceptualised as a struggle for meaning making. In differentiating between 'policy as text' and 'policy as discourse' Ball emphasises the multiplicity of discourses that intersect in the policy cycle:

Policy is both text and action, words and deeds, it is what is enacted as well as what is intended. Policies are always incomplete insofar as they relate to or map on to the 'wild profusion' of local practice.

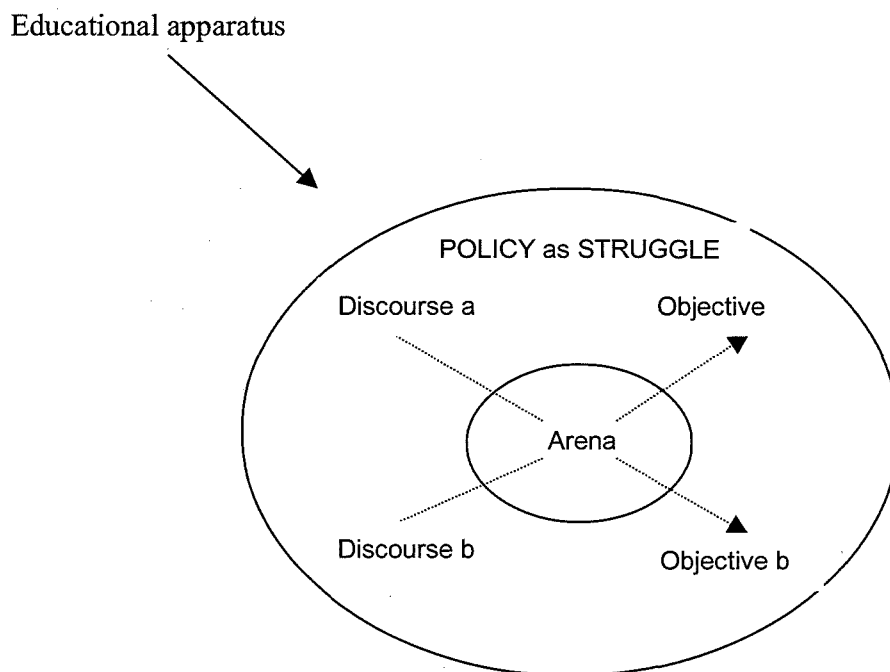
(Ball, 1994a: 10)

4.2.2 Policy Studies Using Discourse Analysis

Like Bowe et al. (op. cit.) policy researchers such as Fulcher, (1989), Kenway, (1995; McHoul, (1984) and Taylor et al., (1997) have attempted to capture the complexity of policy processes utilizing various methodologies of discourse analysis. Fulcher (ibid.) adopted a discourse focus in her research on integration policies in Victoria, Australia. The research examined how different groups within the educational arena, influenced

policy relating integration and integration support groups (p. 4-6). In attempting to represent policy processes, Fulcher stressed that mediation of policy took place through multiple discourses, which intersected in the process and inevitably led to tensions, contestations and contradictions. She also drew attention to the political nature of policy,

Figure 4-2: A political model of policy based in a theory of discourse.



(Fulcher, 1989: 4-6)

While the model is useful as a representation, the 'arena' has the appearance of a single domain, rather than multiple discourses from multiple domains, all intersecting in different ways.

Taylor (1997) attempts to address the issue associated with multiple policy actors, and draws on the work of both Bowe et al. (1992) and Fulcher (ibid.) in her research in Australia and Britain. For Taylor, discourse theories provided the methodological and theoretical tools for tracing how 'policy problems' are constructed and defined - how particular issues 'get to be on the policy agenda' (Taylor, 1997 :28). In her studies of equal opportunities policies in Australia, Taylor traces the lexical changes that occurred

in the course of the policy process. She argues that changes in the economic, social, political and cultural contexts of Australia at the time shaped the content and language of policy documents. Discourse theories have been used by Taylor not only to examine the construction of policy but also to investigate how policies are 'read' and 'used' in different contexts (p.29). In a joint study with Henry, Taylor examined the implementation of the Carmichael Report, a major report that was released in Australia in the early 1990s addressing vocational education (Henry & Taylor, 1993). Henry and Taylor (ibid.) looked at '*text and consequences*' (p. 31) in order to examine the dynamics and politics of 'on the ground' policy processes. The study illustrated that there were major slippages between the rhetoric and practice - the phenomenon described as 'policy refraction' (Freeland, 1981 cited in Taylor, 1997). The point that Taylor makes, is that in the course of policy implementation, the process of negotiating meanings and responding to political imperatives to get policies 'up and running' (ibid.), often results in a range of struggles arising from differing power relations between different policy 'layers'. Discourse analysis is considered an important methodological means of analysing these layers within their contexts and in relation to broader policy agendas. From the BCC perspective, the pressures of time, to have the school fully operational within the space of six months, certainly meant that policy processes were very much negotiated within the constraints of getting the school 'up and running'. As I show in later chapters many policy decisions were made 'on the run' (as described by an EDWA Senior Officer), rather than in a coherent and strategic manner.

Some policy researchers have criticised post-structuralist approaches to policy theory arguing that they underplay the constraints of the state on the policy-making process. Hatcher and Troyner, for example, argue that Bowe et als.' policy cycle 'distorts understandings of the policy process, especially in relative powers which it assigns to the central apparatus of the state and to the schools' (Hatcher & Troyna, 1994 :156). Gerwartz (1996) accepts Bowe et als'. (ibid.) contention that policy processes are often difficult to control and sometimes indeterminate, however, is concerned that policy studies that focus on discourse have tended to underestimate the power of the state, and the difficulties associated with local contestation of state policies. Her study of the effects of the introduction of market mechanisms in England after the 1988 Education Reform Act and

the difficulties experienced by schools in responding to the changes (Gewirtz, 1996) illustrates the limited power that schools have in responding to some policies of the state. Oversubscribed schools for example, had far more scope to manoeuvre than undersubscribed schools. The former could introduce selection methods that controlled the number and type of students. Oversubscribed schools could filter out disruptive or low achieving students (often those from low-socio-economic backgrounds), or those with special needs, whilst undersubscribed schools were often pressurised to take all comers, regardless of their background, in order to maintain enrolment figures, and thus their funding. Whilst Gewirtz (*ibid.*) is primarily concerned about social justice issues, her study is relevant to the study of BCC, in that it suggests quite clearly there are some policies of the state over which schools have little or no control. There is no question that state policies impact schools. The measure of control and the range of responses are often determined by local factors, beyond the control of the school community.

Henry and Taylor (1993) also criticise post-structuralist approaches to policy research for failing to situate fine-grained analysis in a material or structural analysis. In responding to this criticism, policy researchers are increasingly incorporating into their research, structural analyses, including theories of the state, in order to address the structure/agency dichotomy (Ball, 1994a). I turn now to a discussion of a number of these studies, to extend the discussion of policy processes.

4.3 Policy and the State

In Chapter two, I discussed the wide range of policies that were in varying stages of formation in WA, at the time of opening BCC. Many of these policies were inextricably linked to the state, which at the time, was undergoing a radical restructuring under neo-liberal ideologies (Dale, 1997). Because this thesis addresses the relationship between established and emerging State policies and their impact on the establishment of BCC, I have included the following discussion of some of the literature relating to policy and the state.

In his discussion of policy and the state, Dale (*ibid.*) suggests that there has been an increasing move in most Western societies towards neo-liberalism and that education systems face three central problems; (i) supporting the capital accumulation process, (ii)

guaranteeing a context for its continued expansion, and (iii) legitimating the capitalist mode of accumulation including the state's own part in it, especially in education (p.274). While Dale (ibid.) stresses that different states have responded to global changes in different ways, he also argues that in general, there are common patterns occurring in most Western education systems. In broad terms, these changes relate to the two categories of governance and accountability. In terms of governance, Dale suggests that 'state intervention' in education has three distinct influences - 'how it is *funded*, how it is *provided* and how it is *regulated*' (ibid.: 275, original italics). Dale further asserts that three major institutions, the state, the market and the community, as the key co-ordinators of these activities, have had their roles expanded dramatically in recent times. Certainly, in the context of this study, these were all major considerations for the opening of BCC.

In his discussion of accountability, Dale (ibid.) draws on the work of Offe (1990) and suggests that the state's capacity to act effectively may be severely limited. The limitations often occur 'in policy areas where the passions, identities, collectively shared meanings and moral predispositions within the "life world" of social actors (rather than their economic interests) are the essential parameters that need to be changed in order to achieve a solution' (Offe, 1990, cited in Dale, 1997: 280). Dale's position emphasises how individuals bring their own meaning making to the policy process and individual dispositions and habitus impact significantly on the shaping of policy. This discussion is particularly relevant when considered within the context of the changes that were being proposed for BCC.

According to Dale (ibid.), the process of devolving accountability to the community is a further strategic response by the state to maintain control and at the same time distance itself from the actions of its agents. The point is also made that devolution of decision making to local communities is often a rather token effort; what Dale terms a 'licensed departure of a very limited kind, rather than the actions of a genuinely liberal state in a pluralist society' (ibid.).

In relation to this study, the State certainly devolved many responsibilities and decisions to the local Ballajura community. However, as I suggest in the analytical chapters, there was some confusion and certainly a good deal of control surrounding the implementation of change and innovation at BCC.

Like Dale (ibid.), a number of policy researchers have focussed on the contradictory nature of the demands made on the state, and the tensions that arise from the need to simultaneously meet these demands (Codd, Gordon & Harker, 1990; Ozga, 2000). Making reference to the situation in New Zealand, (which has remarkable parallels to the situation in WA after the release of Better Schools (Ministry of Education, 1987), Codd et al. (ibid.) theorise the relationship between the state and policymaking from a neo-Marxist position. Adopting a Gramscian perspective Codd and his colleagues argue that state education policies in New Zealand can be seen as 'attempts by agents of the state to deal with the complex and contradictory problems of fiscal management and political legitimisation' (p. 15). What emerges in the discussion by Codd and his colleagues is that classic conceptions of the state, from a Marxist perspective, do not adequately account for the complex functions of state institutions and the current changes in educational policy-making. Quoting O'Connor, the authors suggest that:

Neo-Marxism stresses that politics and state policy are deeply enmeshed in modern capitalist accumulation. The deep interpenetration between state and capital, policies and the market, means that modern 'political capitalism' is inexplicable in terms of conventional economic and political theory. Instead, it is argued that we need new kinds of political economic theories which explain economic crisis in relation to political processes and dynamics.

(O'Connor, 1987, cited in Codd, Gordon, & Harker,
1990 : 16)

In seeking to provide new ways of theorising the state, Codd and his colleagues also draw on the work of Offe (1984), who argues that the capitalist welfare state 'seeks to implement and guarantee the *collective* interests of all members of a *class society, dominated by capital*' (Offe, 1984 cited in Codd et al., 1990 : 16). In terms of policy, this means that state agencies are faced with two contradictory purposes. On the one hand, a key motivation is to provide for the disadvantaged in the community by 'market exchange processes', and on the other hand there needs to be policies that support 'the commodity production and exchange relationships of the capitalist economy' (ibid.).

In a more extended discussion of policy and the state, Torres, (1995) reviews theories of the relationship between the state and education, including liberal, neoconservative, neoliberal, neo-Marxist, poststructuralist, postmodernist and feminist theories. Not only does the analysis demonstrate the wide-ranging theoretical perspectives adopted by policy researchers, it also highlights the multilayered, complex and dynamic nature of the relationships between the state and education. Torres (ibid.) suggests that many policy studies are concerned with either implicit or explicit analysis of: 'the relationships between education and government, the relationships between education and the economy, and the relationships between education and citizenship building' (p.262). In Chapter two, I suggested that many of the changes initiated at BCC were a direct result of national and State level policies that had increasingly become associated with the role, purpose and functioning of government in Australia. As a result, federal and State policies were increasingly linking education to the economy (Kenway, 1995).

Education and citizenship building, the third of Torre's (op. cit.) considerations for policy studies, implies analysing the ways in which the state socialises individuals in particular ways. Torres draws on theories of cultural reproduction, making reference to to Bernstein, (1996) to illustrate how state-education systems structure the power and control relations of knowledge transmission through the pedagogic device. For Bernstein, (ibid.) the pedagogic device of education systems is structured by the rules of production, recontextualisation and evaluation. Production rules demarcate between 'thinkable' and 'unthinkable' or 'esoteric' and 'mundane' forms of knowledge. Recontextualization suggests Bernstein (ibid.), is the ideological process through which discourses are brought into new relations with other discourses through a process of delocation, relocation and refocusing. In the case of BCC, research on middle schooling, undertaken in other States and countries, was recontextualized by the planners and architects to justify the inclusion of year seven students at the school. In this way, the power and control relations internal to the research on middle schooling were used to influence both the curriculum and pedagogical arrangements at BCC.

In this section, I have mapped out the different approaches to policy research, suggesting that more recently, there has been greater attention to the theoretical

consideration of discourse and the importance of situating policy research within a broader theory of the state. Clearly there are a number of dominant discourses being used to theorise educational policy and these relate directly to discourses of change and innovation.

In the following section, I will discuss the particular approach to discourse that I used in framing much of the analytical parts of the thesis, including critical discourse analysis and social semiotics.

4.4 Critical Discourse Analysis as a Tool for Policy Research

In this section I clarify the relationship between the analytic traditions of critical discourse analysis and social semiotics, because in some policy studies, analysts conflate the two methods under the broader heading of 'Critical Discourse Analysis' (CDA) (Janks, 1997). Social semiotics and CDA are both underpinned by a critical theory of language which are concerned with the study of texts from a political perspective (Fairclough, 1995; Mills, 1995). Critical discourse analysts are not just interested in the role that language plays in shaping social practices, but also how social and cultural practices shape language. In this sense, critical discourse analysts are concerned with the 'social and political forces and processes as they act through and on texts and forms of discourse' (Hodge & Kress, 1988 :vii). Critical linguistics is also crucially connected to the study of ideology since linguistic meaning and ideology are both dependant on social structures (Fowler & Kress, 1979). Language, whether spoken or written is therefore a central concern in discourse analysis.

Fairclough's (1989, 1995) model of CDA ties together three different but interrelated processes of analysis, which are linked to three interrelated dimensions of discourse. These include:

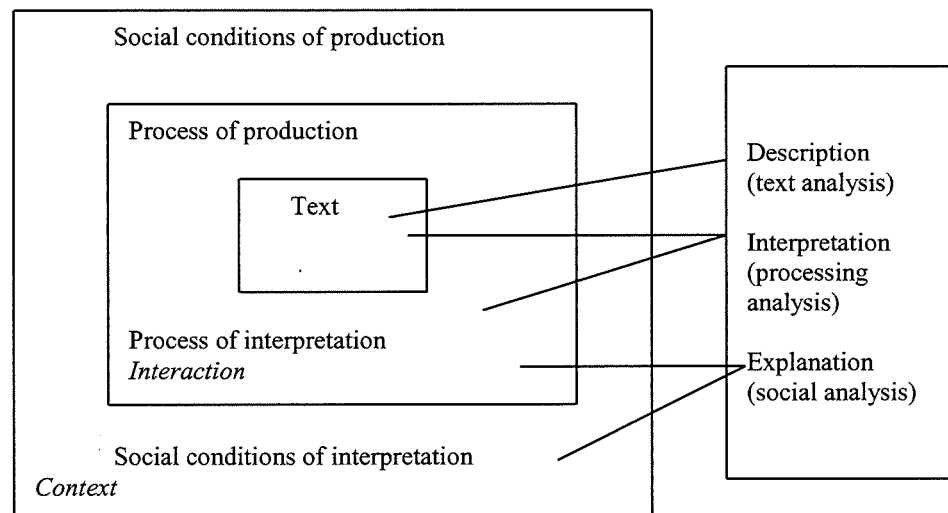
- (1) the text which is the object of analysis (whether spoken or written);
- (2) the processes of production and interpretation (writing/ speaking/ reading/ listening/viewing either individually or in concert), and
- (3) the social and historical conditions of production and interpretation.

For Fairclough, each dimension requires a different kind of analysis:

- (a) Text analysis (description);
- (b) Processing analysis (interpretation), and
- (c) Social analysis (explanation).

Figure 4:3 is a representation of Fairclough's dimension of discourse and discourse analysis. I have added to Fairclough's original diagram and incorporated the analytical aspects in the far right hand box after (Janks, 1997 :330).

Figure 4-3: Fairclough's dimension of discourse and discourse analysis.



(Fairclough, 1989 :25)

Fairclough emphasises that a text is a 'product of the process of text production' (ibid.: 24) within a broader discourse. Discourse, involves social conditions of production and interpretation at three different levels: the level of the immediate social situation, the level of the social institution and the level of the society as a whole (p.25). The embedding of the boxes in the above figure indicates the interdependence of the dimensions of discourse.

According to Fairclough (ibid.) in undertaking discourse analysis, each of the stages of description, interpretation and explanation require different analytical

approaches. The stage of description is concerned with the formal properties of the text, and will focus on how these properties influence production/interpretation. The interpretation stage examines 'less determinate aspects of text' (Fairclough, *ibid.*: 27) and focuses more on the situational context and the intertextual context. The explanation stage 'is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context' (*ibid.*: 26) and involves an examination of both the social processes in which the text was produced and interpreted and also the social effects. Fairclough's (1989, 1995) analytic framework is especially useful because it provides multiple entry points into a text and focuses on different signifiers that make up the text (Janks, 1997).

Critical discourse analysis has provided researchers with the analytical tools for 'reading between the lines' (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996 :13) in texts in order to bring to the fore, the power relationships in meaning making. Researchers in the CDA field such as Fairclough (1992, 1993, 1996) have also sought to trace broad trends in public communication as a method for understanding social change. For example, Fairclough (1992) has traced what he terms the 'colonising movement of advertising from the domain of commodity marketing ... to a variety of other domains' (p.117). He illustrates how schools and universities are increasingly directing resources to marketing as part of the enterprise culture in education, a point that is taken up by other policy researchers (cf. Whitty, 1997a, 1997b; Kenway, Bigum & Fizclarence, 1993).

Fairclough draws on Gramsci's (1971) concept of hegemony, arguing that there is a close connection between hegemony and discourse. The concept of hegemony relates to the process of 'the winning of consent in the exercise of power' (Fairclough, 1995 :17). 'Hegemonies within particular organizations and institutions and at a societal level are produced, reproduced, contested and transformed in discourse' (Fairclough, 1992 :10). Within organisations, alliances are formed and certain concepts gain valence within the 'field of statements' (Foucault, 1972 cited in Fairclough, 1992 :46). These concepts are incorporated into the discourse and subordinate groups and concepts are subjected to a mode of domination, not by coercion, but rather through a process of integration. Discourse becomes a crucially important element in the process of social change. Through the process of intertextuality (see below), orders of discourse are transformed through a process of hegemonic struggle. This results in the 'articulation, disarticulation

and rearticulation of elements within a discourse' (Fairclough, 1992 :93). Dialectical processes ultimately contribute to the reproduction and transformation of discourses and new hegemonies. An example relevant to this study, is the colonising movement of devolution in education, which has been implemented in varying forms in many countries throughout the world and was a central policy concern at the time of opening BCC.

CDA has been selected as one method for this study because like Fairclough, (ibid.) I am interested in tracing trends in the educational arena within the context of establishing BCC: looking at the interrelatedness of theoretical, political and institutional dimensions of change and innovation.

While CDA offers a method for explicating how we make meaning from linguistic semiotic resources, social semiotics seeks to explicate how we make meaning through all of the semiotic modes at our disposal (Lemke, 1998). In the following section I outline how I used a theory of social semiotics as an important theoretical tool for policy analysis.

4.5 Social Semiotics as a Tool for Policy Analysis

Social Semiotics is not a separate and discreet field of critical discourse analysis (CDA): there are close relationships between the two. Hodge and Kress stress this link, explaining that: 'social semiotics [then] emerged to subsume CDA into a broader study of **all** semiotic systems involved in the construction and circulation of meaning. But the successive stages have not rendered the previous stages obsolete' (Hodge & Kress, 1993 :159, my emphasis).

Semiotics has its origins in the work of the Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure. Central to Saussure's theory of language was the study of signs. Although linguistics was seen as only one part of the science of signs, Saussure thought that 'of all other semiological systems, language could be best expressed in terms of a system of structures' (Guske, 1998 :1). Saussure posited that language could only be understood by conceiving of it as a system of structural relationships. In this way, he differentiated between language 'langue', 'the norm of all other manifestations of speech', and 'parole', the individual realisation of speech events' (ibid.). For Saussure, the nature of the sign is arbitrary; 'a physical object with a meaning' (Fiske, 1982 :44). The relationship between

the signifier and signified is not inherent to either the quality of the signified, or the word/sound. As such, the meaning of a word is not determined by the external reality in which it is used, but rather, in opposition to other words within the system. The meaning of individual signifiers is 'defined not by [its] positive content but negatively by [its] relations with the other terms of the system' (Cobley, 1996: 104).

In theorising language as a system of structural relations, Saussure posited that words derive meanings across two axes - 'on the syntagmatic axis, a word is assigned meaning by the words surrounding it, whereas on the paradigmatic axis a word derives meaning from the words that were not chosen' (Guske, op.cit.).

While Saussure's theory of meaning making was based on 'how language means systematically' (ibid.) social semioticians are interested in the social aspects of language. For most social semioticians the sign is not the result of an arbitrary connection of form and meaning. Rather, the meaning is expressed in a form which is most apt, most plausible, for the expression of that meaning. In other words, signs are, in the relation of meaning and form, motivated. This motivation expresses the interests of the maker of the sign in that which is to be represented. In my thesis, this is crucial: an architectural drawing, or a building, or a curricular document, can be treated as a sign in which the form of the sign leads to plausible hypotheses about meaning. Hence, a building can be read for its meaning.

Halliday (1978) is concerned with 'how language means only as it gets used' (Guske, 1998 :3). Central to Halliday's (1978), theory is the view that the socio-cultural environment in which communicative acts take place is crucially important to meaning making. As I suggested in Chapter one, Halliday stressed that 'a social reality (or a 'culture') is itself an edifice of meaning - a semiotic construct' (ibid. :ii). The 'functional interpretation of meaning' can only be achieved by taking into account the importance of the 'context of culture' and the 'context of situation' (ibid. :8). Halliday speaks of language as 'meaning potential' and identifies three functions: the 'ideational', the 'interpersonal' and the 'textual', which work together to produce meanings in any given situation. These functions of meaning 'are all interwoven in the fabric of the discourse' (Halliday & Hasan, 1985: 23). The 'ideational' function is predominantly realised in

lexicogrammatical terms and is a function of 'representing the world around and inside us' (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996 :13).

The interpersonal function relates to the function 'of enacting social interactions as social relations' (Halliday, op cit.) and is connected to the 'tenor' of discourse as determined by the roles that are either assumed or assigned to the interlocutors. The formal situation of an industrial tribunal for example, is quite different to an informal discussion with an architect to decide the colours of the 'front office' of a school. That is, choices of 'mood' and 'modality' (Halliday, 1978 :223) are determined by the *field*; which relates to what is happening or the social action taking place (Halliday & Hasan, 1985 :12).

Halliday's 'textual' function relates to the textual features of a spoken, written and in the case of this thesis, drawn and built forms that come together to form a text. Any text is made up of different compositional arrangements 'which are combined as complexes of signs which cohere both internally and with the context in and for which they are produced' (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996 :41).

Social semiotics views all texts as 'information systems' (Halliday, 1978 :2). The notion of text in the work of social semioticians, includes not only spoken or written words, but also all other semiotic ways of encoding meaning: in a wide variety of modes, including architecture and built forms. These signs work to give meaning as 'motivated conjunctions' (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996 :7) between the signifier and signified. Whilst they may at times be represented in linguistic forms such as speech and writing, they are frequently made up of complex interlocking systems which arise from the social, historical and cultural backgrounds of the sign maker and the sign reader. Thus, in analysing school change by looking at texts, it is necessary to view these texts within a wider contextual framework and to integrate the linguistic factors with the socio-linguistic. As Kress suggests:

The social occasions of which texts are a part have fundamentally important effects on texts. The characteristic features and structures of those situations, the purpose of the participants, the goals of the participants, all have their effects on the form of texts which are constructed in those situations. The

situations are always conventional. That is, the occasions in which we interact, the social relations which we contract, are conventionalised more or less thoroughly, depending on the kind of situation it is.
(Kress, 1985 :19)

In analysing BCC architectural drawings, there was a need to move beyond language as the main focus for analysis and to recognise the importance of the medium of drawing as an alternative means of meaning making. Architectural drawings as a genre typically combine the two modes of graphic and visual communication: the use of images as the predominant mode suggests that drawings create meanings in ways not possible in words. As Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) point out, the visual 'encode(s) in a manner not at all directly dependent on, or a 'translation' of, verbal language, aspects of culture which are deemed to be best represented in visual form' (p.19).

Social semiotics provides a theoretical frame for viewing change in terms of 'interested action of socially located, culturally and historically formed individuals' (Kress, 1997b :19). Kress (ibid.) sees change as constant transformations of representational resources within a particular social and historical moment and in response to a particular occasion. That is, there is a 'personal, affective and social interest' which shapes the 'direction' of the remaking of the resources (ibid.) as signs, whether simple or complex.

Understanding the impact of policy changes with regard to middle schooling and 'community' can be understood more thoroughly by examining the semiotic webs that constituted the 'social' in the early 1990s, a time when there were multiple policy agenda circulating within and around the educational arena. This was a period when change was penetrating every aspect of schooling - curriculum, pedagogy, work practices and notions of 'community', and these policy changes were in turn, 'built into' the BCC buildings.

The key question relating to the BCC architecture for example, was to examine how the discourses of school change influenced the representational language of architecture which in turn influenced the spatialising practices (de Certeau, 1984/1988) of students and teachers within the school. Clearly the architectural drawings and built forms outline the *modus operandi*; a narrative of what it is to be a student, a teacher, a principal, a community member and secretary within a given spatial arrangement; in this

case, a new secondary school. They are not merely figurations (de Certeau, *ibid.*) they are in fact constitutive of the operations and social interactions envisioned within the given spaces. The architectural drawings are also inscribed with ideologies and meanings outside the text - that is they are the material realisation of policies relating to new forms of secondary schooling and new curricular arrangements.

Thus, the representation of a 'Community College' *produces* a different notion of a secondary school. It is constructed with a narrative in mind - what the teachers and students will do, how the community will participate in the school and what the spatial arrangements for students and teachers will be. Central to the analysis of BCC architecture was a motivation to understand how discourses of change and innovation, of middle schooling and 'community' were semiotised into architectural features of the school and subsequently, impacted on new organisational structures and social arrangements. How did architectural representations *authorise* certain ways of being and doing? What discourses contributed to reinforcing and perpetuating existing practices and what others opened up possibilities for new alternatives?

Because the social domains and domains of practice associated with the establishment of a new school have different practical, political and ideological foci, social semiotics allows the examination of the specificities of each. It was the variety of forms of texts that constituted the data for this study, that required an alternative method of analysis. For example, the interviews are quite different in material form and discursive formation to the architectural drawings. Because social semiotics is equally interested in all modes of representation, it allows for an analysis of a variety of data related to different domains of social practice associated with the establishment of the school. Thus, social semiotics with its emphasis on all modes of meaning making, makes it possible to theorise the interconnection between texts and social structure. Texts are not static, nor do they carry one 'true' meaning. As any text is read or spoken in different contexts, it is changed, sometimes in 'entirely minute and barely noticeable ways' (Kress, 1997a :94) to suit the purpose and context of the new sign maker. In terms of policy processes, this then means that individual agents draw on existing texts through a process of 'intertextuality', and it is this concept that I will now examine more thoroughly.

4.5.1 Intertextuality

The term 'intertextuality' was first used by Kristeva (1986) to explain the constitutive and constituting nature of texts. Working closely from the work of Bakhtin, (1986) Kristeva posited that intertextuality implies 'the insertion of history (society) into a text and of this text into history' (cited in Fairclough, 1992: 270). This means that texts are continually reconstituted, reshaped and reworked from previous texts and in the process these (new) texts subsequently contribute to the process of social and cultural change. Intertextuality also provides a theoretical framework for analysing how change occurs within the constantly shifting and continuous process of social interaction. As Voloshinov says:

Any utterance, no matter how weighty and complete in and of itself, is only a moment in the continuous process of verbal communication. But that continuous verbal communication, is, in turn, itself only a moment in the continuous all-inclusive, generative process of a given social collective.

(Voloshinov, 1973 :95)

Viewing meaning making as a 'generative process' implies that all actors associated with the processes of policy-making are continually involved in transformational actions; that is change. The focus for Voloshinov and later Bakhtin is the repeated emphasis on *relation* and *interaction* (Pearce, 1994 :39) where signs derive meanings within the context of established social relations and subsequently give rise to new signs. Referring to spoken texts (speech genres), Bakhtin notes that:

The topic of the speaker's speech, regardless of what this topic may be, does not become the object of speech for the first time in any given utterance; a given speaker is not the first to speak about it. The object as it were, has already been articulated, disputed, elucidated, and evaluated in various ways. Various viewpoints, world-views, and trends cross, converge and diverge in it.

(Bakhtin, 1999 :131)

The making of new signs is conditioned by existing discursive formations, 'each imbricated within an ideological formation, which secure the meaning of specific words, expressions and propositions' (Montgomery, 1992 :14).

Intertextuality provides an important theoretical tool for analysing the way in which discourses of change and innovation at the State level penetrate the educational domain. The concept of 'intertextuality' also provides a theoretical framework for understanding how different educational 'movements' have been transported and transformed from one location to another and across international boundaries. For example, in Chapter two I discussed the many changes occurring in EDWA at the time of opening BCC. These changes were in part, responses to National and global trends which precipitated policy changes in EDWA. Texts, such as national policies, educational research and visiting 'experts' presentations at conferences, were influential in shaping Western Australian policy agendas. Within the *context of influence* (Bowe et al., 1992) policies for devolution, middle schooling and outcome statements to name but a few, were all constituted through a process of intertextuality. That is, these policy changes came from both within and outside the immediate policy contexts of EDWA. These discourses were part of broader national and international discourses that circulated intertextually at the time of opening BCC.

Within the *Context of Text Production and Context of Practice* (Bowe et al. 1992), EDWA policy makers, architects, community members, teachers and students drew on a range of texts, reconstituting and transforming them in the process. In focussing on the wide range of texts and their relationships, the intertextual system is therefore a critical concern for the study. (Kress, undated) uses the term 'intertextuality' to describe how texts are continuously reconstituted and transformed through interaction. For Kress (ibid.) intertextuality is:

A notion of text which takes text as 'weave' radically seriously: all text is always constituted out of other texts, which in the process of constituting the new text are transformed in line with the generic requirements of the new texts.

(Kress, undated :5)

Both Kress's and Kristeva's definitions of intertextuality stress the social practices associated with the dynamic nature of texts. In terms of policy processes, the concept helps to theorise the way in which different actors mediate and transform policy texts. Policy processes as we have seen above, involve a range of actors in multiple and diverse settings. Each actor brings to the process, their own set of dispositions, motivations and discursive histories. In the course of the policy process, actors draw on existing signs, massaging them to fit different contexts, turning them around and manipulating them to suit their own purposes. The multiple texts which arise in the policy process find their way into the discourse of policy-making, shaping meanings and being shaped by sign makers in a wide range of contexts through speaking and writing, and in other modes, including visual and built forms.

The concept of intertextuality is also important when considering the ambivalence of texts (Fairclough, 1992 :272). For example in the data for this study there are varying and nuanced meanings of 'community'. As I show in the analytic chapters, these variations depended not just on the context in which the concept of 'community' was being used, but also what mode of representation was being used, how the text was situated in relation to other texts around it and who was 'making' the text and for what reason. For example, an EDWA policy officer used the concept of 'community' in quite different ways when addressing a group of teachers as opposed to a group of parents, writing a briefing note to corporate members of EDWA or preparing the design brief for the architect of the school. In subsequent texts, the term 'community' was inflected and changed by new sign makers (the architect, the principal, the teachers) according to their own situational contexts and purposes. Semiotic practices; that is, how producers make a sign by transforming and materialising 'the stuff which is around us' (Kress, 1997a :94) are therefore inflected by existing texts and discourses, and the individual interests of the sign maker. In this way, semiotic processes imply both structure and agency. That is, the sign maker is conditioned by existing social arrangements and genres, which are materialised in texts, and at the same time, inserts her/his own history and subjectivity and interest into the making of new texts.

4.5.2 Modality

The term 'modality' is a linguistic term 'that refers to the truth value or credibility of (linguistically realized) statements about the world' (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996 :160). In terms of grammar, modality is determined by markers such as auxiliary verbs - words such as *might*, *may*, *will* (e.g. BCC *will* have year 11 and 12 students, rather than BCC *may* have year 11 and 12 students). In addition to these linguistic systems, modality works at the 'interpersonal' levels in order to 'produce social affinity, through aligning the viewer (or reader, or listener) with certain forms of representation, namely those with which the artist (or speaker or writer) aligns himself or herself, and not with others' (ibid:176). The excerpt below from the Western Australian report Devolution: The Next Phase (Black, 1993) is a useful example:

Following the publication of the Better Schools report, many school staff were unconvinced of the need to embark on a program of devolution. The proposals for change were perceived as relating to management concerns rather than a desire to improve the quality of education that students were receiving. Consequently, it is important that in considering next steps in devolution we are absolutely clear about how such changes will enhance student learning.

(Black, 1993 :1)

In this statement by the then Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Education (formally and subsequently, EDWA), Black attempts to distance himself from devolution that relates to 'management' (management has the negative connotations of control, and cost cutting and not necessarily in the best interests of students' learning). He does this by giving it low modality, and giving high modality to 'improving the quality of education that students are receiving'. Using the term 'perceived', a term that in our culture signifies low modality, Black suggests that staff in schools (incorrectly) viewed devolution as a management strategy. Black expresses strong affinity with the view that previous messages about devolution were unclear and that future messages about devolution should focus on enhancing student learning (because after all, that's what devolution is all about). His use of the auxiliary adverb '*absolutely* clear' with the plural 'we' suggests that this is not just about realigning the meaning of devolution towards the higher modality

'student' focus for himself. Rather, as Chief Executive Officer, Black speaks for, and on behalf others by using the plural form 'we'. Because of the uncertainty of the 'corporate we' it is difficult to identify specific individuals to whom Black is referring. However, given his position, it is likely that Black was speaking on behalf of other staff at the central education bureaucracy, and this was a 'corporate we' (Fowler & Kress, 1979 :202). As Fowler and Kress (ibid.) note, there is also a possibility of an antagonistic response because in using the 'corporate we' the addressee (possibly teachers) may be excluded, and therefore read the text with suspicion.

Attention to modality can provide a valuable analytical frame for examining different strategies deployed in the policy-making process. For example, some policy researchers make reference to the phenomenon of 'non-decision making' (Bachrach & Baratz, 1977). In policy terms 'non-decision making is the process whereby a given 'mobilisation of bias' (Schattschneider, 1960 cited in Alur, 1998 :78) is sustained through the suppression of individual interests and ideologies. Non-decision making can take a number of forms, whereby 'elite' groups 'act openly or covertly to suppress an issue' (Bachrach and Baratz, 1977 op.cit.: 78). In policy terms, non decision-making may result when policymakers are not aware of issues or take deliberate steps to avoid dealing with particular issues. Viewing non decision-making from a semiotic perspective means that the construction of texts involves deliberate motivated choices relating to what is and is not referred to in a text, and more importantly, how the text is structured. The process of 'reading between the lines' utilising a combination of semiotic analyses provides a more thorough method for explicating meanings and gaining a greater insight into non decision-making as a motivated and deliberate part of the policy process. In later analytical chapters, there is evidence of non decision-making being used by EDWA as a definite strategy within the policy processes associated with the establishment of BCC.

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed some of the different theoretical and analytical positions used to describe policy-making. The term 'policy' is a contested term and increasingly, policy analysts are incorporating discourse analysis as a central part of policy research. The methodology used for in this study takes account of the ways in which meanings are

contested and changed within organisations, recognising that the process involves hegemonic struggles at both the societal and institutional levels.

In the second part of the chapter, I proposed a more thorough approach to policy research, through the use of CDA and social semiotics, which provide the methodological means for examining the vast array of texts that arise in the process of policy-making.

In the following chapter I provide a description of the methodology used in the study, including further elaboration of how CDA and social semiotics were used to analyse the data for this study.

Chapter Five

Methodology

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the research methods used for the study, and build on the theoretical framework used for the analysis of the data. The first part of the chapter includes a description of the data set, including documentary materials, interview data and autobiographical data. As indicated in Chapter 1, these are collectively referred to as texts. The second part of the chapter includes a discussion of each of the theoretical frames used in the analysis of data including autobiographical narrative, critical discourse analysis and social semiotics.

While I have discussed the meaning of 'texts' extensively in previous chapters, I reiterate that whilst separating each of the data sources into different categories, it should be understood that in this thesis, I use the concept of 'text' to mean any signification, whether spoken, written, drawn or built. That is, I view each of the individual data sources, whether individual documents, interviews with policy makers or my own autobiographical data, as texts. The process of semiosis is influenced by both the internal conditions of a text (generic structure, texture) as well as the external conditions of a text including the social context, previous texts, personal dispositions of the sign maker and the reader (Titscher et al., 2000).

5.1.1 Documentary Materials

A wide range of documentary material was collected, including EDWA policy documents, briefing notes, press releases, newspaper articles, minutes of meetings, building project briefs, architectural drawings and EDWA survey material from BCC parents. Documents were selected in relation to the research questions and against the criterion of privacy and confidentiality. Many of the initial decisions relating to selection of data, required careful consideration of ethical implications and dilemmas, which is discussed further below. It was by no means a tidy business. All of the documents selected were chosen on the basis that they would in no way compromise any of the

participants in the school or EDWA, but would provide information relating to established and emergent policies and how they intersected in the course of the establishment of BCC. In selecting texts, the primary purpose was to understand how texts connected to 'webs or systems of signification' (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994 :315) within the policy-making process. Documentary data 'are particularly good sources for qualitative case studies because they can ground an investigation in the context of the problem being investigated' (Merriam, 1988 :109).

Initially, all documents were categorised into one of the four policy areas. They were then selected according to the following criteria:

- (a) They informed the shaping of a coherent account of the policy-making process associated with the establishment of BCC;
- (b) They provided evidence of the contestations associated with the policy-making process in the four policy categories that were the focus of change and innovation at BCC;
- (c) They provided a point of triangulation in terms of validating claims and interpretations made by myself, and
- (d) They did not in any way compromise the professional standing of EDWA policy makers, teachers, students or other actors involved in the establishment of the school.

Once documentary materials were categorised and ordered into suites, I undertook a process of searching for what I term 'principal texts'. These texts were chosen on the basis that they exemplified the central concerns to be addressed in relation to the four key policies that were implemented at the time of the opening of BCC. In selecting texts, I followed the example of Hodge and Kress (1994), Janks (1997) and Fairclough (1992) who focus analysis on central texts in order to trace the discursive changes in relation to changes in the broader social and historical contexts. In the first analytical chapter for example, I focus on the introduction of middle schooling and the processes of 'community consultation'. I detail the contestations that arose in the course of the 'consultative process', making reference to a range of texts that arose in the course of the policy process. The analysis incorporates contextual background, including my own

narrative account and that obtained through interviews with policy makers. In this way, each of the three data sources is connected.

Meanings in Multi-Modal Texts

This thesis is grounded in a social semiotic view of texts. That is, I see all texts as the material realisation of the process of semiosis. Texts have to be understood within the context of the conditions of production including the social and ideological systems. (Kress, 1997b) illustrates how meanings are powerfully inscribed in different objects, in such a way that they gather extended meanings through the use of different semiotic modes. By 'modes', Kress means 'the semiotic stuff which is drawn on in the making of new meaning' (Kress, 1997a :7). Semiotic modes, then, can be spoken, graphic, visual, gestural, drawn and built. Kress uses the term 'media' (ibid.) to focus on the manner of dissemination; a scribbled note on a scrap on paper is quite different to a formal policy document; they are different in medium, but both are made using the graphic mode.

Kress, (1999) uses the example of a bottle of English mineral water, to illustrate how a plethora of semiotic modes combine with the materiality of the glass water bottle and its shape, to evoke a range of meanings that are intimately linked to social dispositions and ideological formations; the royal blue colour of the label, the black lettering, the gold crest, the letters of particular shapes, the map of England, the picture of a country house, which, when combined with the description, "Delightfully still" evoke meanings in 'a densely packed and concentrated semiotic object' (ibid.: 10) which is designed to speak to a certain social class and its tastes.

Not everyone will engage equally with a semiotic object, such as the glass bottle of mineral water with all its attendant semiotic modes. Individual cultural histories and personal dispositions will result in different responses. Whereas an individual may be predisposed through their own habitus to value certain semiotic objects (such as a glass bottle of mineral water) and the values implied within these, others will have an entirely different response to different semiotic modes, with different values attributed to the different modes.

In the same way as the marketers of the mineral water worked to combine different semiotic modes, policy makers and the architects of BCC also drew on different

combinations of semiotic modes in order to create the semiotic object of BCC. In doing so, they attempted not just to appeal to, but also to create, certain dispositions (of students, of teachers and community members) in a multiplicity of ways - through a multitude of texts that circulated in the lead up to the establishment of the school.

Tracing the ongoing semiosis required the selection of texts, which exemplified the policy processes associated with the establishment of the school. Texts such as newspaper articles, information brochures, parent surveys and architectural drawings arose from events that in themselves, were part of the ongoing semiosis. In order to gain a full understanding of the ongoing semiosis it was also necessary to link the analysis of individual texts in semiotic webs. For example, an analysis of a summary of a parent survey could only be undertaken with analysis of other texts that situated that survey within the multi-semiotic contexts. In other words, the analysis of language alone, was not an adequate frame for examining how meanings were negotiated within the context of establishing BCC.

I use the following example of a 'multi-semiotic communication' (Kress, 1997b) to illustrate the importance of extending the theoretical parameters in order to illustrate how meanings were negotiated and contested in the context of BCC. The process of 'negotiating' the design of the semiotic object, the school uniform with approximately six hundred prospective students and more than one thousand parents. Whilst there is much that can be said about the process of 'community decision making' in schools, in this instance I will use the example to demonstrate how the uniform carried distinctive semiotic meanings that were inflected by the personal dispositions of the students, parents and teachers (and myself as principal) involved in the decision making. Like Kress's example of the mineral water, school uniforms invite individuals to engage in social practices of schooling in quite distinctive ways. It is perhaps not surprising that this first school-based policy decisions, was one of the most contentious initial decisions to be negotiated.

Vignette 5-1

One thousand parents, students, grandparents and community members packed the school to decide on the school uniform. I was overwhelmed at the numbers and the passion with which the issues were debated. There were those who wanted formal uniforms - black lace up shoes, blazers, trousers and skirts, hats, jumpers and accompanying sports uniforms. These parents were talking of 'pride' and 'discipline' and 'identity'. There were discussions of control and belonging. These were the parents who wanted BCC to be a government 'college'; one that reflected the ideals of the private fee paying schools in nearby locations.

There were others who wanted 'flexible' 'student-friendly uniforms'; tracksuits and joggers and shorts and tee shirts in school colours (chosen by the students). These were the parents who spoke of flexibility and student comfort and practicality.

Finally, there were the parents and students who wanted no uniform - who argued that it was an unnecessary expense or that it should be a student's right to wear whatever they wanted. In this group there were students and parents who argued that the school had no right to require the wearing of any specific clothing and that clothing choice was an important part of adolescent identity. Between all of these options, there were multiple variations. Suggestions of colours, of styles of fabrics, were all discussed and debated. Some of the students wanted

designer clothing for the uniform 'aussie' board shorts and 'Mambo' tee shirts; others wanted no uniform.

After putting it to a vote, there was a majority vote that the school would have a uniform. That decided, the question was: What uniform? I have to say I was steering the decision towards a uniform. Apart from the issues associated with pressures for students competing for the latest 'designer clothes'; my over-riding consideration was of safety. I believe that at least with students in uniforms, we will be able to identify 'strangers' who walk in from the street. At the end of the meeting I proposed a 'committee' to investigate alternatives, to organise a display and another 'vote' by parents and students. It was an exhausting process.

(Larsen Personal journal October 05, 1994)

In the same way that Kress suggests that the marketers of the mineral water engaged in deliberate selection and combination of semiotic modes in order to communicate meaning that (ideally) promoted the sale of the mineral water, so too, was the process of uniform selection, laden with meanings beyond language. Those parents who wanted so-called 'college' uniforms were expressing a whole complex of meanings associated with their own dispositions and the dispositions they envisaged for their children. These were the parents who aspired for standards and status, and discipline and control that was typically associated with the expensive private schools. Uniforms of course, as semiotic objects, are designed to do things as well as say things: they have both practical and social impacts.

The parents and students who wanted less formal uniforms or no uniforms were also expressing meaning relevant to their individual histories and preferences. Those who wanted less formal uniforms were expressing a desire to belong and also to control

to a degree what the students would wear; to minimise morning battles about which clothes were 'suitable' or 'available' and for cost efficient solutions.

Those who wanted no uniform argued that there should be no restriction on student clothing and that choosing clothing was the prerogative of the parents and students. These parents and students were marking out their own boundaries of control, tacitly at least, resisting the power and systems of value and prestige associated with more formal uniforms. As semiotic objects, school uniforms emphasised multiple meanings. They worked as codes for all students and all parents. Within the active social context of establishing the school, the meanings associated with school uniforms were realised not just through language, but through different modes - through the fabrics, and styles and colours. And whilst many of the discussions revolved around what 'looked good' or was 'comfortable' or 'practical', there were also meanings that went well beyond these consideration to sets of practices associated with class, with status and with personal goals.

This example illustrates that examining the objects we call 'texts' requires that we accept that 'the modes, potentials and possibilities for sign-makers' (Kress, op.cit.) are vast. The examination of multi-semiotic events such as the one above necessarily requires an analysis of the particular social contexts in which meanings were negotiated through a wide range of multi-modal texts.

5.2 Journal Entries

Personal journals including those recorded throughout the time of my principalship, and later in the course of the research journey, provided rich sources of information. Selecting information from these required a high degree of sensitivity. In the journals that I kept when I was Principal, I recorded confidential material that would not be useable within the account. These related to matters specific to individual children or teachers, and were often of a confidential nature.

The journals often provided a vivid account of the day to day events as they occurred. At the time of recording the accounts as principal, there were no indications of explanations of what was occurring. In many cases they were descriptions and sometimes 'stream of consciousness' writing around events which occurred in the process

of establishing the school. Often they served as a 'thinking through' process in order to record the difficulties, frustrations and celebrations of navigating the space. The vignettes that are included in the thesis were all written as part of my personal journal.

Throughout the course of the research process, I also kept a journal in which I recorded notes and observations whilst collecting additional documentary and interview data and writing up the thesis. The research journal was divided into four sections, as suggested by (Richardson, 1994 :526), and included:

- observational notes, including details pertaining to the interviews and the process of gathering documentary evidence;
- methodological notes which included reflections on how to go about the interviews, what particular areas needed to be explored more thoroughly and what my immediate reflections were after the interviews;
- theoretical notes related to the theory including policy research, and the ways and means of linking the theory to the method, and
- personal notes which included reflections on the research process, including anxieties, breakthroughs and epiphanies.

As part of the research process, I drew on the journals in order to make sense of the experience and to assist in the formal process of organising the thesis into a coherent account. Fairclough (1989) argues that the only way an analyst can gain access to the discourse processes of production and interpretation, those processes which 'take place in people's heads' is to 'draw upon her own member's resources (interpretative procedures) in order to explain how participants draw upon theirs' (p. 167). Apart from providing an account of what occurred in the process of establishing the school, from my own perspective, my journals also served as a reflexive tool, in order for me to examine my own 'interpretative procedures' and to critically evaluate how these influenced the shaping of the policy process, and subsequently, the shaping of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 2000).

5.3 Interviews with Policy Makers

Interviews with policy makers served two purposes. The first was to gain contextual background to policy decisions associated with the establishment of BCC: the second was

to triangulate my own autobiographical account and documentary material. Triangulation requires that researchers 'consciously [to] set out to collect and double-check findings using multiple sources and modes of evidence' (Miles & Huberman, 1994 :235).

Interviews were conducted with twenty senior policy makers including the Minister for Education, Director General, Senior EDWA officers, curriculum managers, a principal from a neighbouring high school and the President of the SSTUWA. Each interview was individually negotiated through an initial formal written contact to the Director General of Education, and subsequently at a personal level. The Director General's personal assistant facilitated the contacts and organised interviews with EDWA policy makers who volunteered to participate. Interviews were conducted face to face, at a mutually convenient time and location, and each lasted for up to two hours. Apart from the interview with the Minister for Education, all interviews were tape recorded and then transcribed by myself.

In general, critical discourse analysis and social semiotics, which stress the importance of interaction in social contexts, give primacy to texts produced in 'ordinary' interaction. This gives rise to theoretical questions relating to the place and purpose of interviews within the study. Can interviews, taken at face value, be treated as data in this thesis? Whether the texts are written documents, (transcripts of) interviews, newspaper articles or architectural drawings, I do not take the overt meaning for granted, so that an interview text is not, directly, to be taken as 'data' unproblematically. Nonetheless, I believe that the interpretation of 'naturally' occurring texts, (the documentary materials) would be strengthened by the insights and background information gained through interviews with policy makers and key actors involved in the establishment of the school. That is, I believed that the 'context of situation' (Halliday & Hasan, 1985: 6) could be better understood, through interviews with senior EDWA policy makers and other agents who were involved with the establishment of the school. This is how interviews appear, and are used in this study.

The importance of using background information to excavate meanings and contextualise 'principal texts' is evident in much of the work of Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996). In order to illustrate the importance of the context-text meaning relationship I

draw upon an example cited in Kress and Van Leeuwen where they analyse a drawing of a ten year old girl, titled 'Colourful Thoughts' (ibid.: 180). I will refrain from repeating the full semiotic analysis provided by Kress and Van Leeuwen. Rather I will give a rather rudimentary explanation of the painting for the purposes of the discussion.

At first look, this painting indicates a brightly coloured composition with a strongly symmetrical structure. In the foreground there are five roughly circular shapes, each different in colour and size. These shapes are organised in a circle, surrounding a central shape that is not fully enclosed and is weeping colour (red). In the background, there are yellow diagonal stripes positioned at regular intervals and between these stripes is a green background covered in small pink dots. On the bottom of the painting painted in black is the title 'colourful thoughts'; at the top is a rough black horizontal line.

For an 'outsider', someone with little or no knowledge of the background context of the making of this representation, there is lots that can be said about the composition of the painting, relating to the individual components; the colours used, the title, the brush strokes etc. But Kress and Van Leeuwen have 'insider' information, which they bring to their analysis of this young girl's painting. They tell us that the girl's mother is a professional painter; that the girl's parents are separated; that the girl is ten years old and has done the painting as a present for her father, who is an academic. They tell us that the young girl thinks that her father's office is 'too bare and functional, and lacked not only sufficient pictures on the wall, but also and above all colour' (p.265). These 'biographical' contextualizations' (ibid.) change the way we as viewers, make sense of the painting. The point that Kress and Van Leeuwen make, like Malinowski, (1923) and Halliday & Hasan (1985) relevant to this study, is that contextualising texts is a necessary part of making sense of texts. Without the additional 'biographical contextualizations' (ibid.: 264) the sign maker's representation can not be fully interpreted.

By structuring the interviews loosely around change and innovation, I was keen to uncover some of the tensions inherent in navigating the space that had been created for change and innovation at BCC. For this reason, the interviews were purposely designed to be semi-structured (Cohen & Manion, 1994) in order to vary the sequence and focus of

questions according to the interests and portfolios of each respondent. As Denzin suggests, this level of flexibility:

Assumes that no fixed sequence of questions is suitable to all respondents, and allows respondents to raise important issues that may not be included in the schedule.

(Denzin, 1970 :125)

The interviews were broadly structured around the themes of change and innovation with an emphasis on the four main policy areas that were the focus for change and innovation at BCC. Through probing, I wanted to uncover how new meanings of secondary schooling were being reworked within the central bureaucracy during a period of intense policy changes. With this in mind, the probing focussed specifically on tracing the processes and practices associated with establishing BCC. Bearing in mind that each respondent occupied unique positions with specific portfolios (e.g. some were directly concerned with curriculum matters but had little or no knowledge of matters relating to the BCC buildings and facilities), I modified the questions accordingly.

Data from interviews with EDWA policy makers required consideration of a number of important issues. Each interviewee had positional power, vested interests and established portfolios. I also knew each of the respondents personally. As an organisation, EDWA is small enough to have meant that I had worked as a colleague with almost all of the interviewees, and this factor would clearly have played a part in the structuring of the responses (Harding, 1991; Stanley & Wise, 1993). My familiarity with EDWA offered both advantages and disadvantages. As an employee of EDWA and a sponsored researcher, I occupied a position as 'insider' (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000). I was able to use my local knowledge of EDWA and interviewees' backgrounds to focus the interviews towards specific areas of their expertise, relevant to the research questions. Rather than viewing the interview purely as a context for 'information gathering', my goal was to engage interviewees in the joint construction of meaning (Mishler, 1986). In light of the fact that I was part of EDWA and thus part of the 'speech community' (Fairclough, 1995: 38), I was aware of the particularities of the institution, including knowledge of the structures, members' roles and institutionally recognised practices within the

organisation. In this way, I was able to use this knowledge to frame the interviews in such a way that uncovered competing discourses and ideologies whilst maintaining as close as possible, 'a conversation'. At the same time, I needed to be conscious of the fact that my membership of the EDWA speech community also meant that I was strongly enculturated in the 'ways of talking' and 'ways of seeing', and thus the ideological norms of the institution. As Fairclough points out:

.... in the process of acquiring the ways of talking which are normatively associated with a subject position, one necessarily acquires also its ways of seeing, or ideological norms. And just as one is typically unaware of one's ways of talking unless for some reason they are subjected to conscious scrutiny, so also is one typically unaware of what ways of seeing, what ideological representations, underlie one's talk.

(Fairclough, 1995 :39)

In the course of the interviews and the subsequent analysis, it was important for me to 'consciously scrutinise' my own ways of talking and ways of seeing and to identify my own discourses in order to be reflexive in the structuring of my account. Gee suggests that 'it is through identifying one's own discourse (and the gaining of meta-knowledge about the structure of a given domain of knowledge) that it starts to become possible to examine the preconstructed in a reflexive way' (Gee, 1990 :4). The formal change of positioning from principal to researcher, over a period of nine months provided me with the opportunity to 'role distance' (Goffman, cited in Giddens, 1987 :118) from the immediate environment of EDWA and BCC and to move towards the position of 'researcher'.

I would argue that responses to an 'outsider' would have been very different. Interview data indicates an honesty and openness from EDWA policy makers, which was a direct response to my position within the organisation, as is evident in the following comment:

JL: I wonder if we can start by you talking about the Education Department of Western Australia's philosophy or strategy for change and innovation, in

general or more specifically with respect to your position as a senior EDWA Officer.

R: After '87, devolution was the big high-level strategy that we tried to implement. I think we implemented about twenty percent or less. I think we got really cold feet along the way. The bureaucracy was factionalised over that major issue of - do you let schools have more control, do you let schools be more accountable to the community or do you really try and retain a centralised system and do some devolution within the line management, but really keep a very strong centralised system in place with the rhetoric of devolution? I think because you had that kind of ... the bureaucracy was essentially factionalised over that. You had a lot of internal fighting and you had groups supporting break-aways. You know, people who wanted to run more out there, or supported by a group in here, a small group. And depending on where they all happen to fall within the power structure at the time, those people out there got very mixed messages about whether this was on or not on and I think were mostly put in a bind. They had to figure out for themselves how they were going to play it and I don't think that's nearly good enough, if we really are a system and we say we've got system strategies, system priorities, system approach. We want all principals to belong to the system. I think we fell well short as a central office in the way over the last ten years we handled the whole idea of what was the system's strategy for change.

(EDWASO 2)

This is not a sanitised account of devolution as a clear cut, policy decision that was implemented in an uncontested field. Here we have an indication of the micropolitics of change **inside** 'the context of influence' (Bowe et al., 1992), of the EDWA bureaucracy. References to factions, infighting and internal power struggles suggest that (even) at the Central level, there were competing ideologies and discourses associated with how the devolution agenda should be implemented (or not) in Western Australian government schools. Admissions of 'mixed messages' 'out there' (in schools) and that central bureaucrats 'fell well short as a central office in the way ... we handled the whole idea of what was the system's strategy for change' indicate an honesty that I believe

would not have been revealed, were I an 'outsider'. While this level of openness was not the case in all interviews, it was not unusual in many of the interviews. My role as principal (on leave) within the organisation positioned me within the EDWA speech community such that I was able to discuss the problems associated with 'policies in the making', with a shared knowledge of the 'values' and 'meanings' of EDWA.

5.3.1 Transcribing Interviews

A good deal has been written about the process of transcribing interviews as a means of accessing further information for research (Silverman, 1993; Symon & Cassell, 1998). Kvale cautions, 'beware of transcripts' (cited in Miles & Huberman, 1994: 89) and suggests that there are inherent dangers in excising coded data from dialogue which has been transcribed and transformed through sifting, sorting and distillation into an abstracted amalgam in the form of written text. The contexts of speech and writing are vastly different. The circumstances of an 'effective' interview presume that both the interviewer and the respondent are jointly involved in constructing meaning. They respond to the social situation, leading each other, pausing, questioning, making false starts and interjecting. The process involves the navigation of the 'space' with the respondent assessing what the interview is about and deciding what can be said and how best to say it (Mishler, 1986). The process of transcribing interviews does however, provide advantages, as Heritage's summary indicates:

The use of recorded data is an essential corrective to the limitations of intuition and recollection. In enabling repeated and detailed examination of the events of interaction, the use of recordings extends the range and precision of the observations which can be made. It permits other researchers to have direct access to the data about which claims are being made, thus making analysis subject to detailed public scrutiny and helping to minimise the influence of personal preconceptions or analytical biases. Finally, it may be noted that because the data are available in 'raw' form they can be re-used in a variety of investigations and can be re-examined in the context of new findings.

(Heritage, cited in Silverman 1993:119)

In writing up the interview, the social situation is completely different. The spoken text is transformed: removed from its context, and in the absence of the respondent, the text is 'remade' into graphic form with the emphasis away from the initial purpose of 'finding out' to one of recording and analysing. In undertaking transcription, decisions needed to be made regarding the conventions to be used. These are directly related to the underlying theoretical positions framing the research. Extensive reading of transcription methods and notation (Atkinson & Heritage, 1999; Ochs, 1999) indicated a wide variation of styles and conventions. The inclusion of detailed notation to indicate non-verbal behaviour such as gaze, gesture and laughter (Ochs, *ibid.*), timing of pauses and overlaps between interviewee and interviewer was not used in the transcriptions. However, all pauses, false starts, 'ums' and 'ahs' were retained. The 'work' of the analysis began with the careful reading and re-reading and listening and re-listening to the tapes in concert, in order to ensure an accurate interpretation of what was said by each of the interviewees. Texts were then categorised according to their relationship to the four key policy areas under investigation, and then coded according to the themes identified within each policy area.

5.3.2 Selecting and Connecting Data

The process of addressing and dealing with the data required careful consideration of the theoretical boundaries of the study. In the first instance the materials presented themselves as an inchoate set of documents and interviews, loosely bound together by way of the context of their generation. A framework was required for sifting and sorting these data into sets and to turn the 'materials' into 'data'. Texts were selected in relation to the central research question that focussed on the impact that established and emergent policies had on the establishment of the school. The study incorporates a number of methodological stages:

Stage One

This stage included the collection of documents in relation to the establishment of the school during 1994-1996. A range of materials was collected including policy documents, minutes of meetings, press statements, newspaper articles relating to BCC

and records of industrial arbitration decisions. At the time of working at the school as principal, I was fully aware that I wanted to focus my research on the process of establishing a new school, however at that point, there was not a clear focus for the research, nor a clearly defined research question. Given the tentativeness of my research focus at that stage, the documents were selected on the basis of relevance to describing the process of establishing the school. As the problem became more focussed on the policy processes through an initial analysis of this data, it became clear that there was additional data needed.

Stage Two

In 1997 after three terms at the *Institute of Education* I had formulated a sharper focus for the research. At this point I returned to WA to collect additional data relating specifically to the four key policy areas which were significant in the establishment of the school. Stage two involved a more systematic collection of additional documents from EDWA policy makers who had been involved in the establishment of the school. I also conducted interviews with the BCC architectural Project Officer at the Building Management Authority (BMA), a principal from a nearby secondary school and the president of the State School Teachers' Union.

Stage Three

Stage three involved further coding and categorisation of documentary evidence into *suites* around the four central policy areas that were the focus of change and innovation at BCC. The process was undertaken in the following stages:

- Sorting documents into categories around the four key policy areas that were central to the study - the introduction of middle schooling, the role of the community, changing work practices and architecture and buildings.
- Sorting and coding documents within categories based on sources - EDWA bureaucrats, BCC teachers, SSTUWA, press.
- Sorting documents into groups under formal and informal controls. Formal controls related to factors embedded in EDWA policies and legislation, informal controls related to cultural perceptions and practices.

- Cross cutting data - looking for relationships and cross category links and tracing these intertextually within and between texts.

Stage Four

Stage four included the transcription, coding and analysis of interview data. Each interview was transcribed in full by myself and then analysed according to the four central policy areas. The intertextual links between the categorisation of documentary and interview data were then traced.

The data were then analysed using a range of strategies including social semiotics and discourse analysis, according to their textual form. For example, architectural drawings and newspaper articles required quite different analytical approaches to those required for analysing interview data. With each successive analysis, patterns within and across each of the four policy categories were identified. Most importantly, I was looking for the intertextual links between documentary data and interview data. Clearly the management of the data in terms of both volume and diversity was a critical factor. Social semiotic analyses are both time consuming and difficult. Given the volume and diversity of the data it was not practical to analyse and incorporate every text using a social semiotic approach. I therefore sought to incorporate social semiotic analyses of 'principal texts' that exemplified contestations associated with the four policy areas.

All discourse analysis requires a level of selection: the methodology necessarily requires the identification of what I have called 'principal texts' in order to undertake analyses (Hodge & Kress, 1993; Janks, 1997; Kress, 1994a, 1994b). Like all researchers I was faced with the decision of how to frame the study (from the perspective of leadership, of curriculum, of policy, for example), which data to discard and which to keep. Having determined to focus on the four main policy areas, I then needed to select the texts that would be given priority within the main analytical categories.

The 'data bits' (Ball, 1991 :187), the 'principal texts' and parts of interview texts that are incorporated within the thesis serve the dual purpose of exemplifying the 'categories and issues' (ibid.) of the analysis and also of shaping the account. As Ball suggests, 'the deployment of the data drives the analysis as exactly what it is about each extract that is meaningful is explained' (ibid.).

Not all of the data carried the same value or weight and clearly, not all is directly referred to within the thesis. Much of the data sits below the surface of the final account, undergirding the main body of the work. As Gudmundsdottir suggests, 'the tip of the iceberg is explicit interpretation' (p. 301), which is what researchers write in their research reports. The biggest part, however, is informal interpretation. It is out of sight and usually unexamined because it is built into the strategies researchers employ to make sense of data (Gudmundsdottir, 1996). 'Making sense' of the data from a social semiotic frame, requires that the context of the materialisation of the text is an essential part of the meaning making process. This places importance not just on the immediate situation in which the text is made, but rather the broader cultural context; 'the history behind the participants and their practices' (Halliday & Hasan, 1985 :4). In using a social semiotic approach to policy analysis, the undergirding data was not 'unexamined' as suggested by Gudmundsdottir (op.cit.). Rather, it is used to provide essential insights into the social practices and culture in which the policy process was enacted at the time of opening BCC.

5.4 Autobiography as Method

A large number of educational researchers (Aspinwall, 1988; Beatie, 1995; Connelly & Clandinin, 1988; Goodson, 1991) are utilising teachers' narrative accounts and autobiographical data as valuable sources for understanding schools and school systems. Woods (1985,1987) discusses the value of using teachers' life histories in educational research, and suggests that they can provide a valuable additional data source in educational research. Beatie claims that autobiographical data:

... allows us to acknowledge that educators know their situations in general social and shared ways, and also in unique and personal ways, thus validating the interconnectedness of the past, the present and the future, the personal and the professional in an educator's life. (Beatie, 1995 :54)

In drawing on my own experience, I have attempted to provide a more complete picture of the processes associated with policy-making and implementation in the context of establishing BCC. As Foundation Principal, I was engaged in processes of

transformation and mediation of a divergent range of texts arising in different contexts. I was an active agent in the policy-making process. Autobiographical narrative held 'holistic appeal' (Convery, 1999 :132) for drawing the threads of the research together and I considered that this was the most effective way for 'uniting researchers and educators; teachers and academics; theory and practice; past, present and future; personal and professional' (ibid.) into the thesis. In this sense, the narrative components of the study serve a *referential* function (ibid.) in the construction of the thesis.

From the start of the study, my intention was to document the processes of establishing a new school, from the position of Foundation Principal and in doing so, to incorporate autobiographical narrative into the study. In drawing on personal journals and autobiographical data, including the vignettes, I sought to create a narrative that would not only serve the important purpose of providing contextual information but also contribute to a deeper understanding of the processes of navigating the policy processes. In theorising the autobiographical narrative, Van Manen (1990), Steier (1991) and Scott and Usher (1996) all provided valuable insights into the method.

Max Van Manen (1990) discusses the value of including anecdotal narratives in research and argues that anecdotal narratives should be understood as 'a methodological device in human science to make comprehensible some notion that easily eludes us' (p.116). When deciding upon the authorial style for writing up the thesis, there were two over-riding emphases that I wanted to capture in the written text: the first was to include a juxtapositional view of the everyday reality of my life as a principal, with that of a researcher. The second was to link this experience to theoretical considerations of policy processes. Reading educational research and being a 'research subject' had sensitised me to the fact that so much of what is written under the banner of educational research oversimplifies the context of the school in such a way as to sanitise the messy realities out of the accounts. In this study, it is the interplay of variables that is crucial to understanding the process of policy-making. My personal experience is important because as agent of change, I was concerned with issues associated with both power and praxis.

In his discussion of reflexivity in research, Steier (1991) describes the notion of reflexivity as 'bending back on itself' (p.2). The looping back of experience places the

researcher in the position of examining not only how she is implicated in the research but is also how she is socially constructed. Steier urges researchers to examine how we are reflexively part of the systems that we study, and suggests that in doing so, we can better understand what others are doing. In this way, the research study involves 'telling ourselves a story about ourselves' in order to challenge our own assumptions and to see (and share) the contradictions and paradoxes of the research process. The inclusion of myself, through the vignettes and narrative accounts within this particular study is of importance because unquestionably, my position as Foundation Principal of BCC strongly influenced the shaping of the research questions and the methodology. I argue that the inclusion of myself into the account offers clues to the situated practices behind the processes of implementing change and innovation in a secondary school. The vignettes and narrative accounts are included to expose the incidental and idiosyncratic details of enacting change in the process of establishing BCC.

During the process of analysing data and writing the thesis, the autobiographical antecedents needed to be checked against other data sources - documentary evidence and interview data. In this way, my own understandings of what occurred and why certain events transpired as they did, were rechecked - turned in on themselves, and gradually, over time, I came to a better understanding of the processes of change, from an entirely different vantage point.

Scott & Usher, (1996) argue that foregrounding reflexivity in research leads to questions relating not just to the individual who is conducting the research, that is the 'personal' (p.37), but also needs to attend to the 'identity' of the researcher' (ibid.). Like Steier (op.cit.) the focus here is on the continuous questioning by the researcher of 'what is going on ' in this research. What kind of reality and what kind of knowledge is being constructed through the questions being asked and the methods being used? For Scott and Usher (ibid.) reflexivity in research demands that the researcher is fully cognisant of both the personal and social conditions that impact on the writing of the final research report. In this way, 'reflexivity is a resource' (Scott & Usher, 1996 :38) which forces questions about the 'embodied and embedded self' (ibid.) within the socio-cultural context of the research site and the academic community. Personal reflexivity draws attention to the significations of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, class (and other autobiographical

antecedents) their impact on the types of questions asked and methods used. These significations must also be considered within the broader social, cultural and political contexts in which the research is being undertaken. Reflexivity requires reflection on how decisions are made in selecting a particular course of (research) action and on how data are discursively constructed. This means that research is not conceived as a purely personal account of events as a guaranteed 'truth'. Rather, in critical research, reflexivity involves problematising the representation in such a way as to acknowledge that any research is a textual construction 'rather than a reflection or translation of a socio-cultural reality' (ibid.:43).

As a sponsored student, a female senior principal within EDWA, an active agent with a long history in educational policy-making in EDWA I brought my own subjective history to the research process. In addition, because the majority of interviewees knew me personally and viewed me as a colleague, it is necessary to recognise that my autobiography undeniably influenced the way in which people responded to me, whether positively or negatively.

5.5 Ethical Considerations of the Research

Christians, (2000) highlights the importance of ethical considerations for all research and raises a number of important points relevant to this study. Christians (ibid.) speaks of the 'feminist communitarian model' (p. 144) in which dialogue and transformation are catalysts for critical consciousness. Given that as researcher and school principal, I had privileged access to a range of documents, a number of critical decisions needed to be considered. In the first instance, there was the issue of which documents to select. Clearly many documents were public domain documents - minutes of meetings, EDWA policies and reports, briefing notes and media releases and press reports. In selecting documents as 'data', I needed to be conscious of the nature of the research questions, and the need to respect the privacy and confidentiality (ibid.) of much of the information that is readily available to a school principal.

Of equal importance were the issues associated with conducting interviews and recording observations. Two points need to be highlighted. The first relates to the earlier issue of the representation of the account. The analysis and account of this research is

clearly shaped by my own subjectivity and the nature of my interaction with those people I interviewed, namely, as 'Foundation Principal' of the school

The second point relates to the ethical considerations associated with interviewing colleagues from within the organisation in which I held the position of senior principal. In no case, whether EDWA policy makers or other stakeholders, could this relationship be neutral. It is crucial that this be acknowledged as a critical factor in the dynamics of all of the interactions, including negotiating access to documents and permission for interviews and the subsequent conduct of these interviews. Whilst on the one level, gaining access to documents and interviewees was relatively easy, I was confronted with a range of personal and professional dilemmas which would have been quite different had I to been researching an unfamiliar site. The established relationships associated with the position of senior school principal in a centralised education system carried both status and power. I was constantly struggling with the implication of this position and the 'dilemmas of self' (Giddens, 1991 :201) involved in the transition from school principal to researcher. Ethical considerations also influenced decisions I have taken with respect to interviewees' accounts. I have deliberately chosen to use codes that do not identify interviewees. All interviewees are indicated as Respondent (R) in transcription excerpts. I also chose not to indicate the gender of respondents because I considered this another way of protecting the interviewee's identity. I took this decision after reading Dimmock and O'Donoghue's (1997) account of innovative Western Australian principals, in which interviewees were given pseudo identities but were nonetheless recognisable to insiders through the combined biographical information and their gender identification.

A third consideration related to the sponsorship offered by EDWA. The process of framing a study on the organisation that was providing partial funding for the research was not unproblematic. Issues relating to researcher positioning, responsibilities and bias all needed to be addressed, alongside respect for individual research subjects' professional positions. At the same time, some of the data is contentious. It indicates a range of competing opinions, a lack of coherent policy relating to new schools and conflicts of motivations. The question of how to represent and share this knowledge was one with which I constantly struggled.

Cameron, Frazer, Harvey, Pampton, & Richardson, (1999) argue that 'empowering research' is '*research on, for and with*', the 'with' implying 'interactive or dialogic research methods' (153-154). In the context of the research, I believe that the interviews and support that I had from EDWA staff clearly indicated a strong commitment to the research. Interviewees were invited to participate; all gave generously of their time, and in a number of cases offered two extended periods of up to two hours for interviews.

5.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I provided a description of the methods used including a details of data collection and selection. In adopting a social semiotic approach to the study, my choice was governed by the epistemological congruence with my own 'paradigmatic commitments' (Symon & Cassell, 1998 :3) as well as the belief that the combined methodology offered the best method for addressing the research questions.

The chapter included a discussion of autobiography as method and ethical considerations of the study.

The following section includes the analytical chapters. The first of these chapters addresses the contestations associated with the introduction of middling schooling in WA. The chapter also examines data relating to the policy change that was directed at expanding the role of parents and the community in the design of the school.

PART THREE

Chapter Six

Steering Of or Steering By the Community

6.1 Introduction

At the time of opening BCC the Education Department of Western Australia was actively promoting a policy of 'community participation' as part of broader devolution reforms (Hoffman, 1994). In this chapter I demonstrate that the notion of 'community participation' was a contested concept that was used variously in order to achieve different ideological effects. By tracing the discursive changes, I demonstrate the 'matrix of power relations' (Ball, 1994a :44) that existed between various groups who were involved in the design and establishment of the school. I demonstrate that existing and emerging policies intersected, clashed, were foregrounded and backgrounded in discourses associated with change and innovation. My intention is to demonstrate how the discourses of 'community participation' and 'middle schooling' were integrated with other discourses and simultaneously overlaid with new policy texts. The resultant conflated policies differentially impacted the school, the Ballajura community and the central bureaucracy and power was constantly being renegotiated.

The first part of the chapter examines how community support was mobilised for the concept of middle schooling. I also examine the policy issues that arose from the decision to include year seven students in a high school setting for the first time in WA. I trace the discursive changes of meanings associated with 'community participation', and 'middle schooling', as these were distinguishing features of the school.

In the second part of the chapter I demonstrate the inter-relationship between policies. The school was part of a highly centralised system that was attempting to implement significant changes to advance the devolution agenda. Through the analysis, I demonstrate that policies did not exist in isolation. The context was one where there was a raft of policies circulating and the context of a new school provided the opportunity for

EDWA to graft a number of new policies on to the notion of middle schooling and 'community participation'. Changes at BCC were both constituted by and constituted of the broader policy agendas of the State. The chapter highlights the shifting power relationships that existed between the government and the bureaucracy, the bureaucracy and 'the community' and the government and the electorate.

6.2 Inviting the Community to 'Participate'

In the preliminary planning stages for BCC, EDWA took the unprecedented step of convening a Steering Committee to participate in the planning for the school. The Steering Committee was comprised in the following way:

- eleven Ministry of Education personnel including staff from Central Office, principals from three neighbouring primary schools and one high school, the Superintendent of the School of Isolated and Distance Education and a teacher from the neighbouring high school (who was later appointed as the 'Ballajura Project Officer);
- five parent representatives, representing each of the primary schools and nearby high school (Morley Senior High School);
- the local parliamentary representative; and
- one senior architect from the government Building Management Authority (BMA).

The first meeting of the BCC Steering Committee was held on the 7th May, 1992 and was convened by EDWA under the working title "*Ballajura Project*". Minutes of the Steering Committee indicate that from the outset, the Ministry of Education had a strong agenda for involvement of the local community and the exploration of 'innovation and change'. The minutes of the first meeting of the Steering Committee report that:

Peter Barrett (Ministry Planning Manager) provided a background to the project and indicated that any decisions about providing facilities for secondary education in the area must be made by the community in response to their needs. It is important that the educational philosophy and theme of the school be developed in order to set the

educational brief. From this time-lines and considerations about the design and construction stages would be made.

(BCC Steering Committee minutes, 7th May, 1992)

The Steering Committee had two formally articulated roles: firstly, in consultation with the community it was to identify the educational philosophy and 'theme' of the school, and secondly, to use the information gained, to inform the building design briefs (BCC Steering Committee minutes, 7th May, 1992). There is no evidence in the data that indicates that the Steering Committee canvassed the broader community to decide on the 'theme' or 'philosophy'. There is however, much data, such as the newspaper article discussed below ('Parents' input urged', Eastern Suburbs Reporter May 26, 1992, see Appendix 2, p.316) indicating that the Ministry of Education was proactive in encouraging the community to participate in, and contribute to, the design of the school.

In this article, the first to be published in the press about BCC, there is a strong 'empowerment of community discourse' (Ball, 1994a :89) which is conflated with an overall theme of innovation. In paragraph two, the 'innovative consultation process' signals a significant change from previous practices associated with the planning of new government schools in WA. The term 'innovative', used to qualify the noun 'consultation' suggests that both the process of designing the school and the subsequent realisation of the school were to be different from previous high schools and the differences were to be decided by the community. The Ministry Planning Manager, Mr. Peter Barrett is reported as having said:

There are opportunities of all sorts of things to be undertaken

We will listen to any proposals the community has to offer.

They can decide on the type of education they think is appropriate for their kids.

Throughout the article, the reporter draws intertextually on the promises that have been made by Mr. Barrett, making reference to the \$10 million dollar initial budget and the final budget of \$20 million. These figures coupled with the invitation to parents to make suggestions for the school clearly carry messages of bountiful possibilities - all to be provided to the Ballajura community by the Ministry of Education. Later references to a

swimming pool and theatre reportedly made by the principal of the nearby high school, (Mr. Smith) reinforce the idea that the Ministry of Education was canvassing a wide range of different ideas in planning the facilities for the school. In this first press report Mr. Barrett, is also quoted as saying:

That (the initial enrolment of 200 students) will gradually build up and by the time the school gets up to Year 12 it would probably be taking almost 300 year 8's.

The Ministry Planning Manager's comment clearly indicates a commitment at that stage to providing a Senior High School¹⁰ in the Ballajura district. In later planning the provision for upper secondary students was to be fiercely contested, a point that I take up later in this chapter.

By virtue of the centralised nature of EDWA and the long tradition of homogeneity, the changing face of the education bureaucracy (responsive - listening, taking advice and providing resources for 'all sorts of things to happen') signalled a distinct policy shift in WA. The seeds of 'community participation' were clearly sown in the early stages of the development of the school. Throughout the article the position of residents moves from 'helping to decide' to being given the right to decide in full. In the final part of the article, the Ministry Planning Manager is quoted as saying that parents 'can decide the type of education they think is appropriate for their kids' (9). The 'categorical modality' (Fairclough, 1992 :159) shifts the status of community input substantially, and signals to the parents and community an unbounded range of possibilities. The shift in status of parents, from 'helpers' to 'decision makers', implies a shift in power relations. Rather than the Ministry advising parents what they would get, the statement signifies to the community that they would be advising the Ministry of what they wanted.

The open-ended nature of the statement implies that residents could decide not just the facilities but also the type of curriculum to be offered at the school (paragraph 2). At this stage (1992) Western Australian secondary schools were all using the *Unit*

¹⁰ Senior High Schools traditionally provide for students in years 8-12.

Curriculum which was mandated, moderated and the major criterion for certification of lower secondary schooling (EDWA, 1994). However, as I indicated above, the Ministry was engaged in trialling Student Outcome Statements as part of the collaboration on a National Curriculum. The change in curriculum at the central level was to have major implications at BCC. At the same time, there were discussions relating to the efficient use of existing facilities and a policy of School Rationalisation was being implemented. This policy was intended to examine facilities, resources and courses within districts in order to ensure maximum efficiencies and maximum student choice in upper secondary courses.

In the weeks and months following the release of the first press report, Steering Committee representatives met with parents of prospective students and community members. Whilst there are not minutes of each of these meetings, there is evidence through the Steering Committee minutes, that each of the members of the Committee was proactive in advancing a range of possibilities for the school. It was no accident for example that the superintendent from the School of Isolated and Distance Education was on the Steering Committee. The School of Isolated and Distance Education was already using Telematics to provide courses to students in remote and isolated schools or schools with small numbers of students, in order to expand the curriculum choices for students in cost effective ways. Minutes of the Steering Committee meetings indicate that the Superintendent of the School of Isolated and Distance Education provided presentations to the Steering Committee on the advantages of Telematics. The Principal from the nearby Morley Senior High School also addressed parents at a public meeting at one of the local primary schools on the 18th June, 1992 and suggested possible strategies for collaboration between the new Ballajura school and Morley SHS. In particular, he advocated the structuring of complementary courses to ensure as wide a range of curricular options as possible, for prospective students. These discussions were not just concerned with student choice, but were also couched in terms of efficiencies for the Ministry. From the very first Steering Committee meeting, there was a clear indication that other policy agendas relating to resource efficiencies and community use of school facilities were to be priorities for the school (BCC Steering Committee minutes, 7th May, 1992).

Data, including letters from parents to the Ministry, such as the one below, indicate how parents interpreted the invitational overtures to 'decide anything they think is appropriate' for the new high school:

Letter from Ballajura Residents

1/7/92

Dear Sir

We are the parents of [children] at [local] primary school, and we feel very strongly that the proposed new high school should provide for community activities - in addition to providing good educational facilities.

As the Principal of Morley Senior High has indicated, specialist and less popular courses should be shared, so as to achieve good class numbers, with either students or teachers travelling between the schools, or, even better, with satellite video conferencing facilities. Thus, a wide range of subjects could be offered by the two schools without unnecessarily duplicating resources.

We suggest that the following be included in the overall plan:

A large, multi-purpose, communal building that could be used as: a gymnasium; a hall for school assemblies, prize-givings etc.; a hall for community functions. This building should definitely be part of the first phase of any development as Ballajura is in desperate (sic) need of a decent sized community hall.

Many people, ourselves included, feel that a swimming pool should also be provided as an amenity - both for school and public use.

A sports oval is also required as we feel that it would be impractical to use the ovals on Kingfisher Park on a daily basis due to the distance from the school site.

The school should cater for vocational and hobby classes during and after school hours for people of any age.

One other concern is the high voltage (132KV) overhead power line that bisects the High School site and Kingfisher Park. With the current (please excuse the pun) debate on the effects of living or working near such power lines, and with the danger of playing near such lines, we feel that the power lines should be routed underground - on both the school and the park sites.

Yours faithfully,
(signed by both parents)

There are intertextual traces evident within the letter that link to the press report above, and (previous) information sessions provided to the parents, on Telematics and teleconferencing as a mode of curriculum delivery. The writers of the letter have suggested collaboration between BCC and Morley SHS and 'even better, satellite video conferencing facilities' as an alternative mode of curriculum delivery. The writers of the letter had obviously heard of the proposals for BCC by attending meetings, reading press

reports and/or talking to Steering Committee representatives at their local school. They reworked and transformed many of the very suggestions that Ministry representatives had proposed in the smorgasbord of options.

The writers of this letter, (one of many) proposed suggestions which they believed would be important for the school. They proposed a large multi-purpose building that would serve as a hall for school assemblies, a hall for community functions and a gymnasium. They proposed an oval and a swimming pool, and finally, the re-routing of the underground power lines because of concern for their children's safety. In respect to curriculum, the writers of the letter proposed 'vocational and hobby classes during and after school'.

What is interesting about the proposals from the writers of the letter is that other than the suggestion for a swimming pool, which had been previously identified as a preferred recreational option through a Shire survey all of the suggestions are for facilities that would routinely be provided within the standard secondary school design brief. These parents, and many like them, were rearticulating back to the Ministry representatives, those very suggestions that had been seeded within the context of the public meetings and informal contacts, **by** members of the Steering Committee. In the second paragraph, the writers of the letter also restate the proposal for complementary courses and the use of satellite video conferencing facilities, which would expand the curriculum on offer 'without unnecessarily duplicating resources'. The reference to resource efficiencies along with suggestions that were clearly stated by members of the Steering Committee in other forums, is clear evidence of the intertextual connections to formal and informal discussions and proposals.

The suggestion for a swimming pool indicates traces of the proposal made by Mr. Smith in the newspaper article (or some other public meeting or personal communication with members from the Steering Committee). Minutes of the BCC Steering Committee (7th May, 1992), indicate that negotiations were being undertaken with the Shire of Swan the local authority, for joint funding for some of the resources, including the possibility for the funding for a swimming pool to be used by both the school and the community. What was not made clear through Mr. Smith's comments, was that a swimming pool could only be built through collaboration and funding from the Local Shire. Failing to

clarify from the start, that there was a finite budget later proved problematic. The Government and Ministry were clearly planning within budgetary constraints, and choices had to be made. The lack of clarity regarding the carving up of the educational dollar (classrooms cost \$x, science classrooms cost \$y, gymnasiums cost \$z) inevitably led to conflict and disappointment. Evidence in the Steering Committee minutes of 16th October suggest that some members (unnamed in the minutes) voiced the following concerns following the release of the first concept drawings of the school:

Concept plan shows limited facilities ...

Community Expectations have not been met in the concept plan (swimming pool). Many members of the committee were critical of the lack of vision shown in the concept and although understanding the resource limitations applying in providing the physical structures, it was felt that a clearer idea of the desirable outcomes for the health and welfare of the whole community needs stronger representation.

(BCC Steering Committee Minutes, 16th October, 1992)

In the above minutes, there is clearly no sense that the community can decide on an unbounded range of possibilities, as they were led to believe in a number of forums, just a few short months before. 'Resource limitations' have reared their head, and the sense of unbounded possibilities is now positioned within a financial discourse. What is relevant here is the way in which the Ministry (later EDWA) engaged in invitational overtures to 'the community' through a range of texts, in order to secure participation in 'collaborative planning' for BCC.

The consultation process with community members and the Steering Committee began in May and by November 1992 eleven possible configurations for the new Ballajura high school had been proposed by parent representatives to the Steering Committee. Each of the models was designed to consider the provision of secondary education in the Ballajura area. The discourse of innovation permeated many of the models, with strong references to technology, complementary courses with the nearby Morley Senior High School to expand student subject choices and a strong emphasis on community involvement in the school (EDWA, 1992). A wide range of consultation meetings took place during which community representatives, local government officials, Ministry of Education officers and government architectural staff evaluated the range of

models. A central concern for parents was expressed in a summary of the consultative processes that indicated that:

Parents have set as the number one priority, the health, safety and welfare of their children and for their education to take place in a stimulating and caring environment.

(EDWA, 1992)

At one level, it is reasonable to conclude that the Ballajura Community was actively involved in the decision making regarding the design of the school. At another level, many of the suggestions 'decided by the parents' were in fact seeded by Ministry planning officers and the Steering Committee. Whilst the newspaper text and other documentary data indicate that there was a proactive strategy to involve the community in the decision making, some interview data suggests that the Ministry was clearly steering community involvement towards particular outcomes:

The feeling from the Department was originally, just keep doing it the same as before, because no one makes a fuss about it. All I want, don't really care what the school's like, so long as we have bricks and mortar there. The opportunity to do something much better with education and enhance the education the students are getting and take them further into the future, meant that those values needed to be tested. And the ultimate adjudicators, I suppose, really were the parents. Because the parents had enough political clout to get a school built. They certainly had enough political clout to have a say, back up through the political and the Minister and the Director General, to say how they wanted the school to be. And in fact, the community consultation process, came about because, probably largely because, to have a say in which schools got built where.

By selling the community on innovation, we were able to go a lot further than we could have otherwise. ... Once we'd broken, once we'd learnt to rely on the parents having a strong political say, which meant the Department felt much safer with trying something new

when, the ultimate consumers of that were comfortable with it, and they weren't going to suffer the repercussions of it. (APL 1)

It was clear that Buildings and Facilities branch garnered community support as a means of progressing a broad agenda for change and innovation at the school. There was also evidence that the mobilisation of community support, through so called 'democratic processes' meant that EDWA, and more specifically, the buildings and facilities project team, were less likely to suffer 'repercussions' at either the bureaucratic or political levels if the community was 'on side'.

Having mobilised the support of the community 'by selling the idea of innovation' (APL 1), the Steering Committee set about seeking endorsement for the proposal that a middle school be built to include year seven students. As the Ministry Planning Manager had said 'there was the possibility for all sorts of things to happen' (see 'Parents input urged, Appendix 2, p. 316) such as including year seven students in a secondary setting in order to solve the crowding problem in the local primary schools. It then became expeditious to advance the concept of middle schooling as the educational rationale for the decision to locate year seven students in a secondary setting for the first time. Other policies, including site-based merit selection of the principal and teachers could also be implemented as 'innovative practices relating to middle schooling'. Parents would inevitably support initiatives that resulted in 'the best hand-picked teachers and principal for their children' and were unlikely to be concerned about the industrial implications of such a policy change.

The data suggest evidence of 'mobilization of bias' (Bachrach & Baratz, 1977) towards particular outcomes. The focus on new buildings and hi-tech solutions were significations of innovation for schooling in the twenty-first century and were conflated with the advantages of middle schooling, in order to mobilise support for the inclusion of year seven students at BCC:

We were able to take the parents' hearts and minds with that one (technology). They were convinced that that was the future for their children. You backed on the old 'you must learn computing scenario' and took

it to the next step. And they went with it and so that encouraged it, so that was the driver. (APO 1)

'Taking the parents' hearts and minds' and coupling the use of technology (one of a raft of inducements) with the 'advantages' of middle schooling, provided a powerful enticement for parents to endorse the significant changes being proposed for the school. In the following section, I discuss data relating to the consultation processes for the inclusion of year seven students at BCC.

6.3 [Ap]parent¹¹ Consultation - Mobilising Support for The Inclusion of Year Seven Students at BCC Middle School

By August 1993, the plans for the school had been drawn and a large model of 'Ballajura Community Campus' was on display in the Ballajura Library. The model showed quite distinctly, that the school had been planned with a middle school and senior school in mind. At this stage however, no formal vote had been taken on the decision to include year seven students in the middle school arrangement. In continuing the mobilisation process, the EDWA Project Officer visited each of the local primary schools and also made himself available at the local library in the week commencing August 16th 'in order to answer questions about the Community Campus and Middle School concept'. At the same time, a number of information brochures were distributed to parents through the Steering Committee, including one that advanced the benefits of middle schooling (see Appendix 3, p. 317-318).

The flyer, (I will refer to this text as the 'Existing Systems Text') which is undated and shows no indication of authorship, was in fact produced by a representative from the Steering Committee. There is no heading, or introduction. Rather, the flyer begins with the title 'EXISTING SYSTEM' and underneath this title the words 'BIG TRANSITION'. The layout of the text includes two framed sections; the top section delineates the 'existing system' and the bottom section, the 'PROPOSED MODEL'. The 'Existing System' is defined negatively - 'Change of school site; Change of learning style; Many changes of teachers'. The visual, including the two ellipses representing primary

(described as a 'Paternal Environment') and secondary, described as an 'Independent Work Environment' are separated by the word 'CHANGE', in upper case typeface, positioned vertically between the ellipses. The embedded text box describes the change in the existing system, as one where 'Children move to a new site that has a different work environment and a culture in which the child fits to the organisation of the senior school. The move breaks the continuity of learning'. The existing system is represented as one that requires a high degree of change. The existing secondary school system is represented as inflexible, because it requires the child to fit to the system. The 'existing system' does not provide a pastoral environment, but rather requires an immediate transition to an 'independent work environment'. This move 'breaks the continuity of learning'. The use of the lexical item 'breaks' connotes dislocation and reinforces the negative aspects of the 'existing system'.

Under the 'PROPOSED MODEL', three ellipses are used to represent the Primary, Middle and Secondary year levels. The curved arrows represent the transition from primary to middle, to secondary, with the wording 'Change of site' and 'Change of learning style' in lower case typeface, directly under each of the arrows. Change is indicated as 'gradual and linked to integrated curriculum continuity'. Middle schooling is labelled as a 'Pastoral Environment'.

Semiotically, the combined visual and graphic modes are used to position middle schooling in a positive light. The 'proposed model' incorporates year seven students in the 'MIDDLE', and this arrangement is far less dislocating for students than the existing system. Middle schooling is positioned as the centre of schooling **and** the centre of attention. Making the transition from primary to middle to secondary is softened by the 'integrated curriculum continuity'. The interspersed educational discourse (e.g. integrated curriculum continuity) with the notion of 'pastoral care' is juxtaposed with the negative connotations associated with the 'existing system'. The designation of a 'pastoral environment' emphasises an 'ethos of ministry and caring in an effort to counter perceived dehumanising and militarizing effects of regimentation and technology' (Fendler, 1998 :57) in the existing system. The insertion of the 'pastoral' shifts the power focus such that

¹¹ I have borrowed this 'term' from Michele Fine (Fine, 1997).

teachers are now positioned in a new professional discourse. As Simola *et al.*(1998) suggest:

... while in the old school there was a clear and open, coercive, and sanctioned obligation to follow the commands of compulsory schooling, the modern school invites and induces, declaring and underscoring a right to learning. Power in the modern school seems to work inductively and invitingly rather than through coercion and command, positively and productively rather than negatively.

(Simola, Heikkinen, & Silvonen, 1998 :81)

The discursive techniques are designed to create new meanings of secondary schooling and new meanings of the secondary school teacher. They are also designed to reflect the changing relationship between the bureaucracy and the community. References to pastoral care are used in the brochure as a distinguishing feature of middle schooling. These references are echoed in the consultation processes. Parents are invited to discuss their concerns with 'Jeff' (EDWA's Project Officer), rather than the more formal 'Mr. Phillips'. In this instance, EDWA personnel are positioned as friendly, informal and available to 'answer questions about the Community Campus and the Middle School concept'. The discourse closely resembles that of a priest (Simola *et al.*, *ibid.*) rather than that of a professional.

On the back of the flyer there was a list of 'Issues' (see Appendix 3, p. 318) that were raised by parents concerning the proposal to include year seven students in the middle school. Placing the 'issues' on the back of the flyer suggests that the Steering Committee is listening to, and noting the concerns regarding the proposal. Nonetheless, the positioning of the issues on the back page suggests that they are of lower importance than the overall benefits. Parents are invited to discuss 'any issue' with the president of the Parents and Citizens (P & C) Association or the representatives of the Steering Committee 'OR an officer from the Ministry of Education'. The use of first and second names as well as the designation of titles (e.g. President, Illawarra P.S., P& C) or indeed the more general, more formal 'officer' suggests that 'issues' are to be dealt with in a more formal way than the informal 'answering questions about the proposal with Jeff'. Here we see a case of what Fairclough (1992) terms 'synthetic personalisation' (p.98) in which

institutional matters are couched within a personal discourse. The power relationships imply that discussing 'the proposal' is done in a friendly way ('with Jeff'); discussing issues is done in a more formal way with designated 'representatives' or 'officers' from 'The Ministry of Education'.

It is also significant that five parent representatives from the local primary school P & Cs were named as the persons to whom any concerns or issues regarding 'The Proposal', should be directed. Names and contact numbers were only provided for one Ministry of Education Officer. In this text, it is clear that the role of defending 'The Proposal', and indeed fielding questions and issues, was to be largely undertaken by the parent representatives. That is, parent representatives were 'proposing' and then fielding questions and defending a major Ministry of Education policy change. The example demonstrates how the Ministry cultivated affinity with the proposal by inducting community representatives through the 'innovative consultation processes'.

Corresponding with the release of 'the flyer' the Steering Committee sent a survey to all parents of children in years K-5 attending the three local primary schools: Alinjarra, Ballajura and Illawarra, regarding the proposed middle school at the new 'Ballajura Community Campus'. Accompanying the survey, was an information sheet (see Appendix 4, p. 319). In the following discussion I will focus on the information sheet, drawing out aspects of content and some features of syntax in order to demonstrate how the Ministry of Education steered community participation towards a preferred outcome. I suggest that the processes and information were 'managed' in order to give an appearance that 'the community' was deciding.

This information sheet is again clearly aimed at persuading parents of prospective students of the benefits of middle schooling. The title, 'PROPOSED MIDDLE SCHOOL FOR YEARS 7 8 & 9' is ambiguous (Fairclough, 1995: 113). 'Propose' can mean 'to put forward for consideration' or 'as a plan' (Concise Oxford Dictionary, CD). In this case, 'proposed' signifies the plan for the Ballajura Community Campus. The structure of the text, including the layout, the lexical choices, the inclusions and the exclusions, as with all texts, are designed to influence the way in which the reader interprets the text and subsequently responds to the accompanying parent survey. In the text, there are no other alternatives proposed to the years 7-9 configuration for middle school that is presented as

'THE PROPOSAL'. The use of the definite article (The) suggests that 'this is the model'. Signalling that the parents, rather than Ministry officers, have formulated the proposal strengthens the appearance of 'parent power'. The suggestion that 'A steering committee, which includes representatives from the three local primary school P& C's (sic) [who have] proposed that a **Middle School** for **years 7-9** be established' implies that there has been collective endorsement of 'The Proposal' by the Parent and Citizen Associations, and that they are in fact 'steering' the decisions. What is not mentioned, is that there was more than double the number of Ministry of Education representatives than there were Parent representatives. However, in the text, there is no mention of the Ministry representatives. This omission serves to reinforce the idea that it is the parent representatives on the Steering Committee who were driving the decision-making.

In addition to the title, the 'information to parents sheet' has four sub-headings - 'The Proposal'; 'What is a Middle School?'; 'What are the Advantages?' and 'Research Findings'. As with the 'Existing System Text' - this text is also designed to represent a positive view of middle schooling and the inclusion of year seven students in the secondary setting. The writers of the text are motivated towards a particular outcome. The information sheet is not just informational: it is primarily persuasive.

Under the heading 'What is a Middle School?' parents are advised that a middle school is a 'unique part of a campus' which provides a wide range of positive benefits to students which are provided 'by specialist facilities and teachers'. A middle school is a 'sheltered pastoral care environment where greater time is spent on increasing learning skills'. Students will be provided the same year seven curriculum and specialist programmes, with 'advanced technologies and learning methods'.

Under the heading 'WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES', there is a description of how students in years seven and eight are taught. The use of the present tense strengthens the definitive nature of 'The Proposal'. The positive representation is further strengthened by the references to the continuity of skill development in areas such as literacy and numeracy and the 'special pastoral care programs'. In addition, students 'have access to a wide range of facilities - courts and ovals, Gymnasium, Visual and Performing Arts Complex, Technology Centre, Library and Science Laboratories'. In a middle school, students are provided a programme that ensures the same year seven

curriculum, focussing on continuity of skills such as literacy and numeracy as well as a wide range of facilities **and** more time to grow as well adjusted adolescents. Students in a middle school receive both the same as that which is provided in the primary school **as well as** special facilities and teachers. These 'advantages' appeal to many of the concerns that most parents would hold for young adolescents. The text is structured to reassure parents that middle schooling is not so radically different from a year seven programme in a 'normal' primary school. However, there are many advantages - special facilities and teachers, the promise of 'well adjusted adolescents' and a focus on the 'basics' - literacy and numeracy.

The rationale for middle schooling is strengthened in the final part of the information sheet, with a reference to 'RESEARCH FINDINGS'. These references acknowledge the changing needs of adolescents and the outdated mode of schooling structures. Other countries and States around Australia are creating new structures (similar to those being proposed) and the results indicate that 'students have developed stable relationships with their peers and adults and are well motivated to learn and succeed'. Calling in research aims to reassure parents that this is not a wild idea - a tenuous experiment. Middle schooling is a tried and tested model; other countries and Australian States have introduced it, and 'research' proves that it works.

The information sheet is carefully structured to position the proposal in an entirely positive way. There is no mention of 'disadvantages', or of the 'issues' raised in previous texts. The authors of the text have structured 'The Proposal' in such a way as to appeal to the concerns that most parents would hold in relation to their adolescent's schooling - skills, pastoral care, and well-adjusted adolescents, success and state of the art facilities. By implication, the information sheet is suggesting that students **would not** get the same advantages, should the school be built as a 'standard secondary school'. For the purpose of BCC, the information sheet was also implying that middle schooling typically included year seven and eight students on the same high school site.

6.3.1 The Parent Survey

The information sheet discussed above was distributed with The Ballajura Community Campus Survey (see Appendix 5, p. 320) to all parents with students from kindergarten to year five, in the three feeder primary schools. I now turn to a discussion of this text.

The first observation that I would make regarding the 'Middle School Survey' is that like much of the other information to parents, no authorship is indicated. Parents are requested to return the survey to the Primary School Parents' and Citizens' Association which is a separate incorporated body, typically associated with fundraising. This is itself interesting because in 1993, School Based Decision Making Groups were the vehicle through which parents contributed to policy formulation at the school level, rather than the Parents and Citizens' Association. The fact that the consultative process was undertaken through the P & Cs rather than the School Based Decision-Making Groups is significant. Technically, P & Cs have no legislated rights to determine policy and at the time of establishing the school, the Ministry was proactively involved in strengthening the role of the school decision making groups (Hoffman, 1994). Nonetheless, parents were instructed to return the survey to their local primary school P & C. This was clearly part of the strategy for positioning the parents as the agents of change.

In terms of power, there is a clear message that parents have taken the lead in designing and conducting the survey. A survey that was authored and distributed by EDWA would likely be professionally typeset and bear traces of authorship, such as an EDWA or a local school logo and a signature. Examining the survey more thoroughly illustrates the way in which the ideological steering continued well after the school plans had been completed.

On the front page of the survey, is the statement:

The aim of this survey is to determine the preferences of parents with children in years K-5 attending Alinjarra, Ballajura and Illawarra Primary Schools to a proposed Middle School concept to open on the new school site in 1995.

Please read the attached information before answering the survey.

There is an implication in the stated aim, that there are a range of options for parents to consider. However, as I have indicated above, the attached parent information sheet is clearly directed at influencing the outcome towards the inclusion of year seven students in the Ballajura middle school. Read in conjunction with the parent information sheet,

there is clear evidence that the survey is also structured to influence responses towards a preferred outcome.

At the top of the survey is the bolded heading:

SECTION ONE: A MIDDLE SCHOOL FOR YEARS 7, 8 & 9.

This statement positions the 'The Proposal' as the definitive option to be considered. Other options are contained in smaller print in the body of the survey.

The survey is structured in three sections, each with one question that has three alternatives. The first question asks parents for their opinion of 'The Proposal' (What do you think about the concept of a Middle School for year 7,8 & 9? Is it a good idea?). Parents have the opportunity to answer YES, NO or DON'T KNOW, with several lines for comment. In all questions, the option that supported 'The Proposal' is stated as the first option.

Question Two is prefaced with the advice that 'ONE of the following recommendations will be made to the Ministry of Education'. The survey positions the Steering Committee **outside** the Ministry of Education, when in fact the majority of members were Ministry Officers. Question 2 asks parents to rank their recommendations in order of preference, however there is some ambiguity about the choices:

1. Open a Middle School in 1995 with year 7 & 8 students enrolled on a trial basis only.
2. Open a traditional 5 year High School in 1995 with only year 8 students as the first intake.
3. Open the school in 1995 with a long term commitment to the Middle School Concept.

Option 3 is clearly ambiguous. I use this word 'ambiguous' to imply ideological steering (Fairclough, 1995 :113). Option 3 could mean: open the school **without** year sevens and in the longer term, consider the Middle School Concept. It could also mean, open the school in 1995 **with** year seven students and commit to this arrangement unequivocally: that is, view the decision as a long-term commitment. Alternatively, it could mean: open a standard high school with a philosophical commitment to the principles of middle schooling for years 8-10 students: that is, excluding year seven students.

Question three, is prefaced by an instruction to parents to 'think about how the final recommendation should be made'. The question asks:

How should a decision be made about the final recommendation?

- A. From a consensus of the combined preferences of all parents surveyed?
- B. As a school by school ranking.
- C. By parents having individual choice where children attend.

In question three, there is again a high degree of ambiguity, particularly with options (B) and (C). Option (B) is not elaborated but could mean that decisions regarding future options for students should be considered on a whole school basis. That is, if the majority of parents in any one school vote 'No' then all year seven students at that school would remain at the primary school site. The use of the term 'ranking' is however, confusing. Option (C) bears no relationship to the question 'How should a decision be made about the final recommendation?' It is semantically and syntactically inconsistent with the question.

In total, 1170 surveys were distributed to parents in the three feeder primary schools. Forty eight percent of parents returned the survey, and of these, sixty two percent responded 'Yes' to question one (What do you think about the concept of a Middle School for year 7, 8 & 9? Is it a good idea?). There are a number of points that are relevant to the discussion. Firstly, the structure of the survey privileged the endorsement of a year 7, 8 and 9 middle school at BCC, particularly when read in association with the accompanying information sheet. Secondly, there was ambiguity to a number of options, indicating an ongoing mobilisation of bias, towards a preferred outcome. Thirdly, the survey gives the appearance that parent representatives on the Steering Committee were directing the conduct of the survey. The lack of indication of authorship, and the structure, including hand-drawn boxes strengthen the ideological steering. There is a clear message that the Steering Committee is **separate from** the Ministry (despite the fact that there are eleven Ministry representatives on the Committee) as is indicated in the final paragraph of the survey:

Thank you for answering this survey.

The information gained will be used by the Steering Committee to determine the final recommendation to

the Ministry of Education on the configuration of the proposed Ballajura Community Campus.

Finally, it seems somewhat of an afterthought to be surveying parents for their preferences, when in fact the Steering Committee had already proposed that a middle school for years seven, eight and nine be established. The design of the buildings, including plans and a three dimensional model had been completed on this basis and were displayed within the public arena at the time.

One has to ask what purpose the survey was to serve, given that the accompanying information sheet indicated that the Steering Committee 'had [already] proposed that a middle school be established for years 7-9'. One can assume it served to reinforce the view that the Ballajura parents were steering the decision making processes associated with the school, and further, that the parents had a range of options with respect to their children's secondary schooling. The unanswered question is: what would EDWA's strategy have been, had there been overwhelming opposition to the inclusion of year seven students at the school?

There is no doubt that the Ministry was proactive in mobilising parents to participate in the decision making regarding alternative models of secondary schooling at Ballajura. Indeed, one of their key tasks was 'to set out a number of recommendations to go to the Minister of Education, concerning school structure and organisation' (BCC Steering Committee Minutes, 16th October, 1992) at BCC. Nonetheless, the data suggests an ideological steering directed towards the inclusion of year seven students in a new middle school arrangement. The bias of the political process was not evident because the nature of public controversy was shaped in advance by the political elites. 'Community involvement' meant that parents of prospective students and community members were mobilised to support the proposals for BCC through a carefully planned strategy. Parents were invited into the consultative process, as if there was a power-neutral partnership (Fine, 1997). The strategy involved the induction of the parent representatives into the Ministry's plan for BCC. The parent representatives then became the Steering Committee's (Ministry's) agents for mobilising the wider parent body. Whilst there is an appearance of equal power relations, parent representatives were

members of two overlapping communities (Fowler, Hodge, Kress, & Trew, 1979). On the one hand they were part of the community comprising the parents and children within their locality. On the other hand they were part of a formally constituted committee with responsibility for deciding the secondary schooling options for theirs and their friends' and associates' children.

Tracing the intertextual connections indicates a gradual mobilisation of the parent representatives and then the subsequent garnering of broader community support towards the outcome that had been envisaged by the Steering Committee for the school. This process of mobilising for enduring support was not one of coercion; rather it resulted from shaping a preferred representation and then garnering support for the proposal. As Bourdieu suggests:

So as to ensure that this enduring mobilization comes about, political parties must on the one hand develop and impose a representation of the social world capable of obtaining the support of the greatest possible number of citizens, and on the other hand win positions (whether of power or not) capable of ensuring that they can wield power over those who grant that power to them.

(Bourdieu, 1991 :181)

While advanced industrial societies are increasingly demanding greater information and greater participation in the political processes, politicians and bureaucrats are becoming increasingly adept at manipulating information in order to achieve the obfuscation of certain facts and the achievement of preferred outcomes (Peters & Marshall, 1996). At BCC the community gathered momentum and realised its power, often writing to the Minister and Director General to voice their concerns. By 1996 the process was considered to be far too haphazard; too difficult to 'control' and thus EDWA instigated a 'line management process' in order to 'manage' the community involvement:

JL: How do you think that was managed by the Department, the process of community involvement and consultation? I mean what do you think were the

strengths and weaknesses or the difficulties or whatever with that?

R: I think one of the strengths was the Department demonstrated that it was prepared to listen. But initially there was no defined line management path between the school community and the Department and it was very much a scatter gun approach.

The community would write to the Minister or the Director General. And as a result of agitation, a very strong line management process was put in place that successfully managed the situation. (EDWA SO 8)

The 'successful management' of the situation could easily be read as 'control'. Whilst the community were writing directly to the Minister, there was less scope for mediation by EDWA Officers. Establishing a 'strong line management process' meant that complaints and lobbying by the community could be filtered by the bureaucracy, rather than being directed to the Minister. There was a dual process of impression management taking place. On the one hand the bureaucrats were obviously keen to be seen by the Minister as 'managing the situation', anticipating risks. On the other hand bureaucrats could mediate and transform complaints under the broader discourse of 'community participation'. Through the process of impression management politicians and bureaucrats retained control over the public issues relating to BCC. Retaining control requires procuring support for the 'legitimate representation' (Bourdieu, 1991: 182). To cite Bourdieu again:

... the legitimate representation is built up, to the ecclesial mode of production, in which the proposals (motions, platforms, programmes, etc.) are immediately subjected to the approval of a group and thus can be imposed only by professionals capable of manipulating ideas and groups at one and the same time, of producing ideas capable of producing groups by manipulating ideas in such a way as to ensure that they gain the support of a group (through, for example, the rhetoric of the political meeting or the mastery of the whole set of techniques of public speaking, of wording one's proposals or of manipulating the gathering techniques which allow you to 'get your motion carried', not to mention the mastery of the

procedures and tactics which, like the manipulation of the number of mandates, directly control the very production of the group.

(Bourdieu, 1991:182)

The process of establishing a 'legitimate representation' which was based on the implementation of an innovative middle school that included year seven students was achieved through the winning of 'public consent' (Codd, 1988:237) through a wide range of public forums, information brochures and press reports. The 'democratic process' was structured around the strategy to include parent representatives on the Steering Committee and to subsequently use these parents to promote public discussion of 'The Proposal'. The data suggests that in fact, there was a preferred option from as early as November 1992, and that the whole process of community consultation was designed to garner support for this option. The intertextual links are evident as traces in earlier texts. In fact, the very first Steering Committee meeting indicates that the inclusion of year seven students was one of the Ministry's proposed options for consideration (BCC Steering Committee Minutes, 7th May, 1992). Garnering of support was not undertaken through coercion. Rather, it was achieved through winning consent by 'integrating [community members] into apparatuses of control [which they then came] to feel themselves part of' (Fairclough, 1989 :36). The risk of community opposition and political fallout, in a highly sensitive political electorate, meant that the Ministry could proceed with a range of new policy initiatives with minimal opposition.

6.4 Grafting Policies on to Policies

In the above sections, I traced the discursive changes associated with the establishment of BCC as the State's first middle school and the inclusion of year seven students in the high school setting. In this section I make reference to data that illustrates the multifarious policy agendas that were simultaneously impacting on the design of the school. In particular, I address the policy relating to 'School Renewal' and 'Community Use of Facilities'.

Steering Committee minutes indicate that discussions indirectly addressed two new EDWA policy areas, both of which had arisen from Government policies. These

included 'School Renewal' and the community use of school facilities. In the case of 'School Renewal', the Ministry sought to optimise the use of capital resources in order to address changing demographics which over time, influenced school enrolments. Metropolitan government schools had had a classic trend of burgeoning numbers of students in newly developed areas in the first years of their operation, and then gradual decline in numbers as the student population aged. This had resulted in some schools being under-utilised in later years. The 'School Rationalisation and Renewal' project was established to maximise the use of buildings and to consider a reassessment of school sizes and 'alternative delivery structures' (EDWA, 1994 :64). One strategy included clustering schools together to provide a range of programmes for students in a broader region, rather than the immediate school catchment zone under the broad category of Local Area Planning (LAP).

The policy for expanding the community use of school facilities derived from the Better Government Agreement, (Western Australian Government, undated) which was released in 1992 by the then Premier, Dr. Carmen Lawrence. This agreement between State and local governments sought to rationalise government expenditure and to capitalise resource sharing. The Agreement sought to:

consider how best to organise government, to think about how we can co-operatively provide the best possible services at the lowest cost and to make sure that governments are clearly accountable to their taxpayers and ratepayers

(Western Australian Government, undated: (i))

Within the Better Government Agreement (ibid.) the first area indicated for 'immediate review' (p.3), under the heading of 'Capital Resource Sharing', related to 'education facilities':

The focus will be on developing models for sharing capital facilities between the State Government and Local Government. Consideration will first be given to the potential for co-operative funding, planning, design, construction and operation of shared education facilities. Facilities considered should include

libraries, performing arts and recreation and
community meeting facilities
(Western Australian Government, undated, p.3)

References to these two policies are clearly evident in the minutes of the first, and later, meetings of the Steering Committee for the *Ballajura Project*. What is interesting is the way in which the policies were applied within the BCC context. There is no direct indication of the policies as key agenda items. Rather the policies are infused within the discussions. They arise at different points, in different contexts. They are there and not there, they are foregrounded and backgrounded. They are conflated with other ideas, melded together and slipped in at different points within the minutes.

For example, in the minutes of the first meeting of Steering Committee at which there were only Ministry representatives, there are references made for consideration of 'other schools and communities sharing the BCC facilities' and 'looking at the needs of all sectors of the community for example old aged persons' (BCC Steering Committee, 7th May, 1992) and '(T)he involvement of service clubs, councillors, local government management and state government agencies is **critical to ensure rationalisation of services and facilities**' (ibid.), carry direct intertextual traces of the government's broader policy agenda for reducing costs by sharing provision of services between central government and the local authority. The minutes of the sixth *Steering Committee* meeting record:

The Ballajura Project is seen as a suitable pilot project under the "Better Government Agreement" plan. (*sic*) Particularly as a tripartite funding agreement is likely to bring forward the timeline for construction.
(BCC Steering Committee, 16 October, 1992, item 3.2: 2)

The introduction of new policies relating to middle schooling and 'community' carried intertextual connections to other policies that were emerging within EDWA and the State Government. Utilisation of school facilities by the community and collaboration between schools within districts were discussed in the first Steering Committee meeting. There is strong reference to these texts although in the course of the meetings these texts were

transformed in order to situate them within the context of BCC. In other words, intertextual connections to 'The Better Government Agreement' are couched within the 'exciting and innovative opportunities' for 'partnerships' with parents and the local government. Regional or district 'solutions' and rationalisation of educational facilities were major considerations in later policy decisions relating to the provision of upper secondary courses at BCC, as I demonstrate below.

6.5 Creating New Meanings at the Central Level

By 1994 the buildings and facilities branch of EDWA was proactively advancing the policy for community involvement at BCC. The mobilisation was being worked at two levels - at the local community level and back up through the organisation of EDWA. The discourse of 'community participation' was clearly used to strengthen the ideological shifts within the educational bureaucracy. A briefing from EDWA Buildings and Facilities Branch regarding Ballajura Community High School¹² illustrates how the processes of ideological steering permeated the bureaucracy in order to graft additional policy agendas onto the notion of 'Community High Schools'. Part of the briefing (undated, circa March, 1994) is included below:

CONCEPTS OF COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

The school has been titled "Community High School" to reflect the spirit of community involvement in the consultation process used to develop the education and design brief and in the following contexts:

1. The term Community High School was introduced in the early stages of consultation by community representatives to ensure a focus would be on addressing community needs.
2. The school has been designed with ease of community access in mind and planned joint use of major buildings.
3. The local authority has been involved in planning the school and committed itself to sharing the cost of some facilities and developing community services on the school site.

¹² The name of the school was changed in the later part of 1994 to Ballajura Community College.

4. For the purposes of merit appointment to Principal, other promotional positions and staff selection, an additional criteria has been included as part of the selection process that reflects the nature of the school and is distinct from all other secondary schools.
5. A community representative has been appointed to the principal's selection panel. This is the first time this has been done in WA.
6. The joint management of facilities on the school site by school administration and community representatives may be considered once the school is open and the corporate body has been established.

A Community High School is distinct from other secondary schools by the extent to which:

- The school's ethos is established and the organisation operates.
- The buildings are designed and facilities provided.
- The criteria for staff appointment is set and selections are made.
- Local authority contributes to capital, development and management costs.

Buildings and Finance Briefing (EDWA undated, circa March, 1994)

Despite EDWA initiating the 'community involvement', the above-mentioned briefing suggests that community members were responsible for the 'community' emphasis at BCC. Furthermore, the notion of 'community' is conflated with at least three EDWA policy agendas; the (community) use of school buildings (2), sharing of costs for funding and management of the school by local government (3, 6) and changing the selection processes for the principal (4, 5). Coupling 'community' to how 'the school's ethos is established and the organisation operates' indicates an additional policy change directed at changing the working practices and organisation for staff and students. It is clear from this briefing and the minutes of the Steering Committee that EDWA policy makers associated with buildings and facilities had a significant role in defining the operational parameters of the school under the banner of 'community high school'. EDWA buildings and facilities officers served as the conduit for interpreting central policy texts in the Ballajura context, and then communicating local mediations back to the central bureaucracy. The participation and indeed 'suggestions' of 'community representatives' were used to give weight to the proposals and to advance EDWA's broader devolution agenda. At the school level, the dominant discourses focussed on innovative educational opportunities to be decided by the community. At the central level, BCC was viewed as the vehicle for advancing major policy changes. Documents such as the one above served a dual purpose. Firstly, it served to infuse the policy of community participation into the

discourse of the bureaucracy. Secondly, it served to invert the power relationships associated with community, in order to give weight to further policy changes associated with devolution. In other words: 'the community has made these decisions and we are responding'.

A media release of 17th December 1993 from Greg Black, the Chief Executive Officer proposed the endorsement of the Steering Committee's recommendations with the critical addition in the final paragraph:

The Ministry Corporate Executive has endorsed the four recommendations from the Steering Committee on the proposed directions for this school, and believes that there are opportunities for further advancement of the devolution process.

(Media Release - EDWA 1993d)

Mobilising support for policy changes needed to occur at both the micro (school) level and the (macro) central levels. The buildings and facilities personnel who were managing the process at the school level, were also using the context to promote EDWA's broader reform agenda, and in doing so, there was an additional process of impression management taking place. Convincing members of EDWA of the broader system-level advantages ensured that the initiatives planned for the school would also provide the opportunity for implementing additional policy changes, including changes to recruitment practices and curriculum reforms including the introduction of the new Outcome Statements.

The following press release was developed in response to the Ballajura Community High School (later BCC) Steering Committee's recommendations:

Figure 6-1 : Media Release School for the Twenty-First Century

- 1. MEDIA RELEASE**
- 2. SCHOOL FOR THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY**
- 3. Ballajura Community High School is the first of a new generation of Western Australian Secondary Schools designed to meet the needs of students entering the twenty first century.**
4. The first stage of the school's buildings will be ready in 1995 with an initial enrolment of 450 students in Years 7 and 8.
5. Students in Years 7 to 9 will form a Middle School that has been specially designed to meet the needs of all students, particularly during the critical period of young adolescence.
6. In a middle school Year 7 students maintain the current curriculum, but have access to secondary school facilities and are taught by teams of primary and secondary teachers to ensure the continuity of skill development in areas such as literacy and numeracy.
7. The major benefit for Year 7 students is a smoother transition from primary school to high school, a continued emphasis upon skill development and greater continuity of learning methods and curriculum integration.
8. In the second stage of building a Senior School for Years 10-12 will be developed on the same site and cater for a wide range of curriculum offerings, with courses linked to other schools, particularly Morley Senior High.
9. The school will have a special focus on the use of technology in classrooms, a Technology Centre and extensive computer networks. These, and other facilities to be developed later, will be available for community use.
10. The final recommendations for the school were developed by a steering committee which include community representatives from the three local primary schools. The committee spent over eighteen months in consultation with the community on the educational needs of students and the local recreational and cultural requirements.
11. Consideration is being given to developing arrangements for children whose parents do not wish them to attend the new school in 1995, to remain in Year 7 at their current primary school for 1995.
12. For further information contact Jeff Phillips, Education Officer, New Secondary Schools Project Ph 2645166

EDWA. 1994

This text highlights the key concerns for EDWA in profiling the school. In preparing the briefing for media releases, EDWA's Officer (Jeff Phillips) has already

engaged in a process of mediation, transforming the discussions and agreements of the Steering Committee meetings in order to structure the media release. What is clear is the way in which EDWA foregrounds specific political motivations in the press release - 'School for the Twenty First Century', community consultation, year seven students in a middle school setting, the complementary programmes with Morley Senior High School and the flavour of 'innovation', with reference to technology and extensive computer networks which are clearly systemic priorities for reform. EDWA uses the media as an instrument for 'selling' the ideas of reform within a clearly structured and manipulated context.

How much the journalist appropriates the message contained within the media release, depends entirely on the 'transformative action' (Kress, undated) of the reporter/writer. She/he will selectively draw on this 'intervening text', this 'prior text' (Kress *ibid.*, :5), making reference to the antecedent text (the media release) and other semiotic codes and generic conventions, in the process of 'constructing' the new media report. This 'reference to other texts' and 'transformation of prior texts', (Kress *ibid.*, :6) is evident in the press releases and subsequent media articles relating to BCC. There are common threads in all articles - community participation, technology, and middle schooling but these threads are selectively woven into the media articles according to the generic conventions of the remade text and the ideological positioning of the writer.

EDWA was clearly using the media releases to strengthen its own political position and moves towards devolution. The coupling of the two events - the building of a 'School for the Twenty First Century', a new, innovative 'high-tech' school with 'advancement of the devolution process' being 'slipped in' as an important ideological and political 'afterthought', suggest that in fact the school was clearly to be used not just as a testing ground but also as an example to other schools within the system. This was confirmed by a number of interviewees:

JL; What do you think was the impetus for Ballajura to move so far, I mean given those constraints in what we had seen in our traditional high schools, what was the impetus behind that, that move then at a new site at Ballajura?

R: I think it was to send a message, it was to send a message to the whole system.

*I mean here's a place where you have the possibility of setting up a school exactly like all other schools around it but in modern facilities and with a bit of tinkering **or** you can use it to send a message that things in schools can be, **should be** different.*

And so what you do is set up a school where the person who you put in the job actually establishing it, has clearly got a vision for a school that is different to an ordinary high school, to do with curriculum, to do with the structure, to do with the links with the community.

These are all key aspects which people knew when Ballajura was being set up. They sort of knew what they were going to get, I think.

(EDWA SO 2 respondent's emphasis)

What became evident from the data was that the vision held by EDWA policy makers did not always include an educational vision. Whereas the management discourse was clearly articulated in many of the interviews, there was clear evidence that the principal would be the person who would attend to the logistics of implementing the proposed policy changes.

JL: Do you think they had a vision, the System had a vision and strategic map of what it would look like?

R: No, not at all. I think that was the case of having backed the principal. ...

They just wanted some of these key management issues like staffing and so on, to be different.

But they didn't really have an educational vision of how a kid at Ballajura would get a different education in some way, a different educational experience than a kid somewhere else.

It was a case of ... as you started to invent a vision and tried to check it out, is this something like, is this

consistent with the view of what Ballajura would do and be like? It was kind of, no one was home in many ways, because people had some deliberate purposes but they didn't really extend to an educational vision.

(EDWA PO 2)

What is important about this excerpt is that whilst EDWA and the community had a broad notion of reforms, under the headings of 'middle schooling' and 'community participation' in real terms, the enactment of these ideals were left to school to navigate. What is also relevant from the above comment is that there was no strategic plan for a coordinated approach to the multifarious policy impacts that arose as part of the consequential chain. For example, including year seven students in the high school setting, and promising parents that 'specialist primary and secondary teachers' would be recruited for the school, had major industrial and political implications as I demonstrate in the following chapter.

The lack of strategic planning resulted in varying levels of support for the school from senior policy officers. From the interview data it clear that a number viewed the school as a lighthouse for change and innovation. At the other level, there was one senior EDWA Officer who described BCC as a 'bloody mistake' (EDWA SO 1) that should never have been allowed to proceed. The respondent asserted that the decision taken by EDWA buildings and facilities branch to include year seven students in the design of the school allegedly resulted in the increase of costs by 40% for the running of the school. The references to fiscal control and the financial cost of innovation were conflated with the 'uniformity' principle:

*R: If we're running a **very very** tight ship and money is very tight and we're asking people to stick to formula, and we're guaranteeing that no one gets any more than anyone else, innovation is very very difficult because innovation, in my opinion, is resource expensive.*

... I'll articulate, conceptualise the mistake that was made. We agreed to a recurrent forever-cost increase, to fund a one-off capital saving, and the recurrent cost

increase will always in the long run make the one-off capital saving look insignificant. So if all of a sudden you increase, and in this state its 40%, the cost of providing education for a year cohort, and no capital saving in the end is going to equal the cost of that increase, recurrent cost.

JL: So what you're saying, there wasn't a strategic map in response to that problem of overcrowding in the schools.

R: Someone made a bloody mistake.

JL: Right

R: And the mistake was made because the people who build buildings ran it as a consultation process and they were focussing on how they could save costs in terms of building buildings. They weren't looking at a total cost benefit sort of philosophy.

(EDWA SO 1)

Here we see the issue of costs asserted as a major concern, and the consultation process as the reason why the inclusion of year seven students was a 'mistake'. The implications for 'the system' was that uniformity of funding was an important principle - no school could get any more than any other school, especially when 'the system' is running 'a very very tight ship'. The second point raised in the comment above, is that the net savings derived from not having to build a new primary school and including year seven students at BCC, would be outweighed by the ongoing recurrent expenditure of a 'forty percent increase'. These concerns indicate that the policy changes implemented at BCC had serious implications for the system as a whole. This Senior Policy officer was clearly concerned about the consequential effects for the system, an important consideration, given the highly unionised teaching workforce in WA and the broader policy implications for the system. The existing values of homogeneity and uniformity of funding were powerful discourses. In terms of policy, the real question relating to diversity and local community decision making rested on the assumption that change and innovation must be implemented without setting precedents for additional costs.

Whilst there is no evidence of analysis of the costs associated with the inclusion of year seven students at BCC or any other models proposed in the course of the consultation period, there was a strong message that the school was not a cost efficient solution. As a result there was at times, a high degree of hostility and tension directed towards the school and the implementation process was fraught with frustration.

Vignette 6-1

I have just met with EDWA staffing officers regarding the funding for primary teachers' DOTT¹³ time. There is no way that we can work toward the model of an integrated middle school curriculum, if we have teachers on different industrial conditions. The whole basis for having primary and secondary teachers working together is to draw on the strengths of each group of teachers in order provide an innovative integrated curriculum. There has been some suggestion that standard allocations will apply for primary teachers and the school will have to fund the difference through the School Grant. This will place a huge financial burden on the school. I cannot see that we can have two groups of teachers working on different conditions - it would completely undermine the curriculum model that we are planning. I will do everything to convince EDWA that the concept of middle schooling requires us to look at the industrial entitlements of teachers in new ways.

(Larsen, Personal journal, October, 09, 1994)

Notwithstanding the issues raised by the EDWA Officer above, EDWA has since vigorously pursued the notion of *middle schooling* as a system response to Local Area Planning (Angus, 2000). Middle schools are now standard arrangements in a number of

EDWA districts however none has included year seven students. Under the Local Area Planning Policy, a new middle school is currently being planned to include year six and seven students in a northern metropolitan suburb of Perth (Ministerial Media Statement, March 24, 2000) and this will no doubt force the issue associated with differential funding for primary and secondary students and DOTT entitlements for primary and secondary teachers.

The data suggest a lack of clarity at the central level regarding not just the funding for BCC but also the more general concern relating to how EDWA bureaucrats would align themselves with the project

Bureaucratic culture is to, is to manage sort of what you can um minimising the risk and advancing your own interests somehow. That's more the bureaucratic thinking around it, and so when some of these challenges come to the bureaucracy that Ballajura threw up, they were viewed through the light of that sort of thinking. You know...how is this going to damage me, is it going to put me on a limb, how can it advance my career and do I want to be associated with Ballajura or not? Is that a high risk venture or is it safe venture, is it the vanguard of change that I'm meant to be connected with or is it um some sort of lunatic fringe that I want to get far away from? All those things kind of appeared on the agenda in here. Not, not the view of we are here to serve the schools and if the schools want to change something and after all this is what we've officially endorsed for God's sake. Not a wild principal had a weird idea. We endorsed this. But when it came to, sort of, how can we now support it, that was not seen as the job, the job was not support Ballajura being able to go through with what it was there to do. The job was to behave as a good bureaucrat in relation to it. And I think those things are, sort of, the bureaucratic thing and the cynicism thing, are both things are things that run up against continually and I do know they are key factors in explaining why we haven't done a better job at being able to support some system level change.

(EDWA SO 2)

¹³ I remind the reader that DOTT time refers to Duties Other Than Teaching. At the time, secondary teachers had an entitlement equivalent to one day per week and primary teachers, one hundred and sixty minutes per week.

On the one hand the school was seen as an example for the system, to test new policies associated with the broader devolution agenda. On the other hand there was a degree of uncertainty associated with the proposed changes, and aligning one's self with the initiative was potentially risky - the proposed changes were untested and individual bureaucrats were weighing up the potential impact on their own careers.

From a policy perspective EDWA and the government were attempting to implement system-level changes that were designed to improve the quality of education in lower secondary year levels and at the same time increase the notion of 'community'. At the time of opening BCC there was a window of opportunity - the curriculum was being changed, there was a heightened awareness of the needs of adolescents and there was a strong will on the part of many EDWA Officers to trial innovative strategies in new secondary schools. On the one hand, data indicate an orchestrated mobilisation towards a preferred outcome. The 'solution' to the problem of accommodating increasing student numbers in the Ballajura district involved a radical change, in the form of the introduction of middle schooling and the inclusion of year seven students. There is a wide range of data to indicate that the local community, including parents, students, principals in neighbouring primary and secondary schools and local government representatives had a significant input to the design and direction of the school. The mobilisation of community support resulted in a high level of participation in the school, from its early planning to its fully operational stages. In the first two years of the school, parents visited the school, local industry and community groups volunteered support and most importantly the community spirit on which the school was planned, grew to be the lifeblood of the school (see Appendix 9, p. 362).

6.6 Exercising 'Community' Power

The analysis above illustrates how community support was mobilised in order that EDWA could introduce radical policy changes relating to secondary schooling at BCC. Whilst I have argued above that the 'consultation process' was not a power-neutral relationship, the following example illustrates that the Ballajura Community subsequently

exercised their own power to hold the government to the promise that had been made for the provision of upper secondary programmes for students at BCC. The example serves to illustrate that the consultative process actually mobilised parents into a highly political group with a common bond and interest; namely the provision of secondary education for their children in their local community.

In 1995, a central office 'Local Area Planning' team was established in order to address problems:

(A)ssociated with the issue of maximising the return on resources in a range of options, including removal of excess facilities, the modification of excess facilities to permit their sale or lease, the excision of surplus land and the reclassification of schools in accordance with the Education Act.

(EDWA, 1994-1995: 94)

By 1996 EDWA was reconsidering the arrangement of schooling at BCC, proposing that the school remain a middle school, and that upper secondary students be transported out of their local community, to nearby secondary schools which had declining enrolments; that is 'excess facilities'. Whilst I have suggested that the decision regarding middle schooling and the inclusion of year sevens was the result of an orchestrated campaign to secure endorsement through so called 'democratic processes', nonetheless, the campaign, did result in the formation of an active and powerful lobby group in the Ballajura community. Parents were aware of the marginal nature of the Ballajura electorate and used this power to navigate the changing circumstances relating to provision of upper secondary schooling at BCC. In this example, I demonstrate how parents exercised their new-found power, to demand their right for the provision of upper secondary courses at BCC.

Whilst it was alleged that the 'Ballajura community could decide on the type of education they want' and that they had in fact decided on a middle school that included year seven students and an upper secondary campus for year eleven and twelve students, by 1996 decisions relating to efficiencies became the dominant discourse. The rationale for not including upper secondary programmes was couched in terms of 'protecting the integrity of BCC's middle school':

Ballajura, through senior executive, Ballajura was identified as being an innovative school project and was seen as a project different from other schools. Warnbro had gone its own way in another direction with respect to its vision. Ballajura had clearly articulated its vision. Ballajura had clearly articulated its vision being middle school. One of the issues that was raised in respect to taking it to year 11 and 12 was the middle school issue and whether the concept of going to year 12 would impact negatively on Ballajura's attempts to be seen as an innovative middle school er concept. (EDWA SO4)

Here we see traces of the conflicting origins of the Ballajura Project. The interviewee first suggests that '... through senior executive, Ballajura was identified as being an innovative school project and was seen as a project different from other schools' and then later that 'Ballajura had clearly articulated its vision being middle school'. Again there is a reassertion that the school community conceived Ballajura's middle school. Whilst this interviewee indicates that EDWA's primary concern was the protection of BCC's middle school, in real terms, the decision to provide for upper secondary students had major resourcing implications for the government. EDWA and the government were navigating the fine line between meeting previous commitments given to the BCC community, ('there is the opportunity for all sorts of things to happen') and enacting **new** policies about fiscal efficiencies through the Local Area Planning Policy. One of the interviewees for this study, suggested that 'part of the problem with BCC was we just didn't define the boundaries clearly enough ... the community thought they could have what they wanted' (EDWA SO 2).

In response to EDWA's changing position, parent representatives lobbied local politicians, The Minister for Education and the Director General. They argued that EDWA had reneged on its original commitment to provide a year 7-12 facility, and that they had been led to believe that they could 'decide on the type of education they think is appropriate for their kids' (see Appendix 2, p. 316).

Vignette 6-2

I have been summons to a meeting with senior EDWA Officers and local secondary principals regarding the deliberations for the BCC upper secondary facilities. No parents or community members have been invited. The goal of the residential weekend is to map out the upper secondary alternatives for BCC in line with the new Local Area Planning Policy. I find myself in the invidious position of having to defend EDWA's decision to consider alternative options, knowing full well that the initial promise to the community was for a Senior High School at BCC. The parents whilst not invited, are fully aware of the possibility of EDWA changing the policy for BCC. They have lobbied their local parliamentary representative, written directly to the Minister for Education and senior EDWA Policy Officers. I have had a number of parents complaining to me, that as Principal of the school, I have let them down. There was a definite sense from these parents that they felt that I was colluding with EDWA to change the original arrangements for the school. The massive growth in student numbers is also a major consideration. Demographic predictions indicate an expected population of two thousand students by the year 2000. I have prepared a position paper with two options, both of which include an upper school at BCC. However, I expect that there will be a battle to convince senior EDWA Officers that this is the best option for BCC, given the original promises made to the community.

(Larsen, Personal journal, April 23rd, 1996)

The proposed changes resulted in high levels of tension and uncertainty, bargained compromises and political lobbying from the community, in order to enact their 'right' to exercise and test the boundaries of this new-found 'partnership'. Certainly, by 1996, there was no sense that the community 'could decide on the type of education they [thought] appropriate'. The school rationalisation policy which emphasised the need for schools to and districts to collaborate to ensure 'maximising the return on resources in a range of options' (EDWA Annual Report, 1994-1995: 94), resulted in reviews of the post compulsory options at BCC. After a protracted period of political lobbying, the Minister for Education visited the school in June 1996 and the presence of the press and with much fanfare formally announced to the parents that funding would be provided for the school to grow to a senior high school.

There is no doubt that the fact that Ballajura was a new electorate and the seat was being closely contested, that the community's lobbying was successful. The critical point in this discussion is that far from 'deciding any type of education for their children' parents were lobbying for basic provision for upper secondary students within their own locality. At that stage the parents were not concerned about 'exciting and innovative' options. They simply wanted assurances that their children could continue on to year 11 and 12 at the same campus, as had been originally advised by EDWA.

Here we have an example of parents exercising political leverage to exert pressure on the government and EDWA. At this stage, the power relationships shifted. The parents as electors, were demanding that original promises regarding the provision of upper secondary courses be honoured. The excerpt below from one of the interviews illustrates how EDWA and the government interpreted this political pressure:

I think that Ballajura school is fortunate in being able to, and I'm talking about the community here, negotiate with Government about the outcome for the buildings and resourcing for the year 11 and 12 students at the school because the Ballajura seat was created for the last State election and is an extremely marginal one.

It's currently won ... the sitting member who is a Minister within the Government by a margin of something in the order of sixty votes, so in that situation Governments are prepared to move more closely to the will of the people and accommodate system requirements.

And I think from that point of view gave the parent voice greater credibility with the Minister. And I think it was demonstrated in the flexibility by the Department and the Government. (EDWA SO 8)

Here, the EDWA Officer defines the capitulation of 'the Department' and the government as 'flexibility' suggesting that the situation had been resolved through a process of 'negotiation'. Given the political vulnerability associated with the Ballajura electorate the BCC community had substantial leverage in exercising their new-found power. Paradoxically, EDWA had mobilised the parents into a powerful force, and by 1996, parents and the community were well aware of their 'political clout' (APL 1) Pressure on EDWA and the government was all the more potent because of the political situation, and parents were aware of this. The point is that in relation to power, the electoral box exerted enormous pressure on the government. The real question is, would the government and EDWA be equally 'flexible' given a different political scenario? From the EDWA Officer above, it seems not. As Spooner, says, 'only when schools are sited in politically sensitive areas do public protests ever affect decisions' (Spooner, 1998 :152).

6.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the processes associated with 'mobilising bias' (Bachrach & Baratz, 1977) towards the decision to include year seven students within the middle school context at BCC. I have examined the intertextual relations between texts in order to indicate the gradual transformation of discourses towards a preferred outcome. It is clear from the data that EDWA had a preferred solution for the crowding problems in the Ballajura area, and that the decision to involve the parents in an 'innovative consultation process' was a strategy for winning support for radical policy changes in secondary schooling. There was a gradual transformation of discourses resulting in the reworking,

assimilation and articulation of existing EDWA policy texts into new texts. It is through the process of intertextuality that the orders of discourse were changed. The various branches of EDWA were constantly mediating innovation and change at BCC, knitting together ideological positions in order to navigate the political circumstances associated with the proposed policy changes. The State education bureaucracy worked closely with parents in order to mask social conflict and foster commitment to new meanings and signs for secondary schooling. Involving the parents and the community masked the ideological steering that was taking place.

The data illustrates the difficulties associated with transforming an education system from a highly centralised system to a more devolved 'community focussed' system. The centre was clearly steering the process, albeit with a high degree of uncertainty and lack of strategic planning. However, the strong emphasis on local planning led the parents to initially believe that they 'could decide on the type of education they [thought] best for their kids'. In real terms, there was not an unbounded range of possibilities. Nor was there an unlimited range of resources.

How then do we interpret the above policy processes? It would be easy to conclude that a bureaucracy that was adept at impression management and through a process of mobilisation, had duped the Ballajura Community. I would argue that such a conclusion would be simplistic. The evidence in this chapter suggests that EDWA cultivated allegiances with the community, winning consent and integrating community members into the decision making process was an important part of the strategy for change. There was a constant renegotiation of power as the policies were enacted at each of the different levels. As Ball says:

Power is multiplicitous, overlain, interactive and complex, policy texts *enter* rather than simply change power relations: hence, again, the complexity of the relationship between policy intentions, texts, interpretations and reactions (Ball, 1994a:20).

There is a wide range of evidence that suggests that EDWA was genuinely committed to exploring new opportunities for involving the community in local decision making. The discourse of 'community involvement' required that both EDWA and

community members negotiated new boundaries which inevitably resulted in contradictions and struggles at both the institutional and community levels. It was possible to trace the dynamics of the changes, particularly as the ideas of 'innovation' and 'community participation' and 'middle schooling' gained currency. Over time, these new meanings were naturalised into the orders of discourse and producers and interpreters of texts rearticulated these new meanings in a 'seamless' (Fairclough, 1992 :97) way. As Fairclough (1992) suggests:

(This) discursive rearticulation materializes an hegemonic project for the constitution of a new political base and agenda, itself a facet of the wider political project of restructuring the hegemony of the bloc centred upon the bourgeoisie in new economic and political conditions.

(Fairclough, 1992 :93)

At the same time, a number of other policy agendas were conflated with the notion of 'innovation' and these were grafted onto the middle school 'solution'. Discourses associated with 'innovation' were conflated with the idea of 'special teachers and facilities' which paved the way for additional policy changes including a radical change to recruitment practices for principals and teachers and changes to the design of the school buildings. It is to these two policies that I now turn in Chapters seven and eight.

Chapter Seven

The New Work Order - Influences and Impacts on BCC

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter I focus on the wider social and political influences relating to changes to employment practices, which had a significant impact on the establishment of BCC. I have adopted Gee's and his colleagues' title (Gee, Hull, & Lankshear, 1996) because it aptly reflects changes that were occurring within WA at the time of opening BCC. I have suggested earlier that EDWA and the Western Australian government were initiating policy changes in a range of areas which had the potential to radically change the organisation and operation of secondary education in WA. In line with these corporate shifts, the bureaucracy underwent a considerable restructure after the State election in 1993 with the logic of free market and economic rationalism (Robertson, 1994) being juxtaposed with the rhetoric of 'choice', 'flexibility' and 'community participation'.

At the time of opening BCC one of the most contentious new government policies related to changes to employment practices. These included the implementation of *Workplace Agreements* and collective bargains through *Enterprise Agreements*. The rationale for Workplace Agreements was to change the employment practices to allow 'greater flexibility' for both employers and employees. The transformation of these policies for EDWA, resulted in the implementation of site-based merit selection of all staff at BCC and the introduction of conditional appointments (and for principals, salary increments), based on 'performance'. At the same time, EDWA embarked on a process of negotiating Workplace Agreements and Enterprise Bargaining, both alternative arrangements for negotiating conditions of employment and salaries, for principals, school leadership personnel and public servants within the education sector.

This chapter addresses the contestations that arose at BCC from changes in employment practices. For analytic purposes, I have selected a range of texts which exemplify the diverse 'orders of discourse' (Fairclough, 1995 :38) which throw into

relief, the contestations that occurred. The analysis serves to demonstrate how the boundaries between and within discourses exemplify the wider social conflicts and struggles that occurred at the time of opening BCC. The chapter focuses specifically on how changes to employment practices at the State level impacted on the recruitment of the principal and teachers at BCC. I then examine how changes to employment practices impacted on the practical realisation of change and innovation at BCC.

In the analysis below, I draw on a range of texts including the advertisement for the position of principal of BCC, newspaper articles and interview data. I argue that emerging recruitment policies were part of a wider EDWA policy strategy to rewrite the roles of Western Australian principals and teachers in order to strengthen control and surveillance under the restructuring agenda of devolution. The chapter has two subsections that focus the analysis. The first change relates to the selection of the Foundation Principal of BCC under new conditions. The second section deals with introduction of site-based merit selection, an initiative introduced for the first time in WA with the opening of BCC.

7.2 Recasting the School Principal's Role

In February 1994, EDWA called for expressions of interest for the new principal positions for BCC and Warnbro Community High Schools. The advertisement signalled two significant changes in recruitment practices for principals of government secondary schools in WA. Firstly, the positions were expressly advertised for the specific schools. Applicants were required to meet a standard list of nine criteria, and in a tenth, formulate a vision for the school. In the past, principals applied for promotion, nominating regions of WA, and listing schools in order of preference. Principals did not apply for specific schools, nor did the local community or district superintendent participate in their selection. Rather, a centralised selection process was undertaken, and principals were appointed to any school within a nominated region, on the basis of seniority and merit.

The second major difference for appointments to the principals' positions at BCC and Warnbro was that they were conditional in three distinguishing ways. These related to limited tenure appointments, salary increases contingent on (satisfactory) performance

review and the requirement to commit to 'flexible' work arrangements. The conditions of service for the positions were provided to all applicants, and are listed below:

Conditions of Service in this Position

The appointee is accountable to the Superintendent for the effective operation of the school and for demonstrating that the school is operating according to Education Department policy. The school development plan provides the mechanism for reporting both to the Superintendent and to the School Based Decision Making Group.

Limited Tenure Appointment

Recommendations made in 1994 will be for a five year period from date of appointment, subject to satisfactory performance reviews. On completion of the limited tenure five year appointment, the original appointee will be eligible to apply for reappointment. If not reappointed, the original appointee will revert to the status held prior to the appointment. Appointees to the position, Community High School, will not be able to use their level status in seeking transfer, unless they already had this status prior to the appointment.

Performance Review

The appointee will be required to undertake a Performance Review. The review will be carried out by the Superintendent. Early in the first year of the appointment an agreed method of Performance Review will be negotiated between the Superintendent and the appointee. Any annual salary increments will be dependent upon a satisfactory Performance Review.

Flexible Work Arrangements

Staff of Community High Schools will need to adopt flexible working arrangements both within the school day and over the school year to reflect requirements such as the need for community contact.

(EDWA, 1994a)

The re-writing of the principal's position for BCC to incorporate new 'conditions' was built around concepts of 'self-management', 'flexibility' and 'performance'. The

principal was to be accountable to the District Superintendent for the 'effective operation of the school and for demonstrating that the school is(was) operating according to Education Department policy'. Under these conditions, the principal submits to performance reviews that determine salary increments, and in doing so, accepts a form of surveillance from the District Superintendent that had not previously been exercised in WA. More importantly, the District Superintendent was in the position of arbitrating salary increases contingent upon performance.

Performance Review was to be 'undertaken' through an 'agreed method' which was to be 'negotiated between the Principal and the Superintendent'. Whilst on the one hand, the discourse of 'empowerment' (Gee & Lankshear, 1997 :84) is implied through this negotiated partnership of performance review, the real power lies in the changing emphasis towards self-control, and its link to conditions of reappointment. Principals of BCC and Warnbro agreed to engage in performance review within the context of the self-management structure. That is, they agreed to 'place themselves under their own surveillance, ... (and to) control themselves not through 'external' discipline but by applying disciplinary techniques of confession and self-examination to themselves' (Usher & Edwards, 1994 :51) and the superintendent.

The surveillance is strengthened by the limited tenure of the appointment because this condition opened the way for EDWA to rescind the right to a principalship (and the effective 'demotion' to substantive positions held before the appointment¹⁴), should performance be deemed 'unsatisfactory'. Site-specific, merit selection provided EDWA with the opportunity to select two new principals, neither of who had a traditional secondary school principal career trajectory. We were in fact, considered and treated as 'outsiders' by some fellow secondary school principals, the SSTUWA and some EDWA Officers. The appointment of 'outsiders' meant that firstly, we were more likely to accept new conditions of appointments: 'we would be docile bodies and obedient souls' (Usher & Edwards, 1994 :105). Secondly, appointment of 'outsiders' meant that the new conditions of appointment would be more readily accepted, given the competition for principals' positions. EDWA could embark on a strategy for re-writing the principal's

¹⁴ Neither the principal of Warnbro nor myself, held principal positions substantively. Our substantive positions were both considerably lower than that of principal.

role through a new management discourse that emphasised 'flexibility', 'accountability' and 'performance' in the knowledge that we considered ourselves 'lucky' for having secured school leadership positions and thus, willing to comply with the changing conditions of the appointments.

The quarantining of Community High Schools (BCC and Warnbro) from the broad category of secondary schools, and the restriction on transfer rights were also technologies of control, aimed at ensuring compliance and intensifying surveillance. The appointments to a specific school for limited term tenure set a precedent for future promotions to the principalship. New principals had no right to transfer and would not uphold their principal status unless their performance was judged to be 'satisfactory', although there was no framework to define the criteria against which satisfactory performance would be judged.

The emphasis on 'flexibility' 'both within the school day and over the school year to reflect the requirements such as the need for community contact' imply a reorientation of the principal's role towards a market position. The community becomes a central concern and the 'flexibility' implies an agreement to commit (time) to the 'requirements' of community contact. The coupling of 'flexibility' with 'requirements' is not accidental. The introduction of the category 'Community Schools' signalled a cultural shift for EDWA. 'Community response' positioned Western Australian schools into a new trajectory of choice and markets. Principals were now **required** to respond to this new emphasis on the community. In fact, the BCC principal's position was shaped within this new discourse, as can be seen from the opening statement relating to the position description:

Content and Scope of this Position

An aim of the Education Department is to ensure that all students within its schools develop a community focus with skills and attitudes relevant to the community and individual needs.

Community Schools

Community schools represent an innovation in school structure and operation. It is intended that they will operate as an integral part of their communities, with

the encouragement of parent and community participation in decision-making concerning the curriculum, discipline and educational needs of the students. There is a commitment to provide all students with access to a quality education, regardless of educational or social background.

Curriculum

The curriculum is intended to be innovative in nature, offering a range of curriculum areas, which, in years 11 and 12 will ultimately complement those offered by other secondary schools in the area. Consequently, it needs to be recognised at the outset that not all curriculum components are likely to be available at these schools and they may offer unique components complementing neighbouring schools. There is a further commitment to the provision of innovative teaching styles which encourage student-centred learning, and which are geared towards the development of students as whole-of-life learners. Consequently, there is a need for curriculum designs which encourage students to progress at their own pace. The design of the schools takes into account the high demand for access to relevant information technology in education.

School Organisation and Management

The schools will provide educational facilities which are in keeping with the needs of the wider community. There is scope for alternative modes of curriculum delivery and flexibility in the hours of operation of the school. There is also the potential for alternative organisational and timetable delivery structures within the school. No specific commitment has been made in the planning stages to structuring the school on a faculty basis. Teachers and school administrators will be expected to address a range of curriculum areas as well as the pastoral needs of the students.

Background information for Principals' Positions -
Ballajura and Warnbro Community High Schools.
(EDWA, 1994a)

Two different emphases of 'community' are indicated in the position description. In the second paragraph, under '*Community Schools*', the community is clearly implicated

under a governance discourse. 'Parent and community participation in decision making concerning the curriculum, discipline and educational needs of the students' suggests an expanded role for parents at BCC. The emphasis on 'being accountable to the Superintendent **and** the School Based Decision Making Group' sharpens the focus for control and surveillance of the principal and teachers by parents and members of the community. The expanded level of control by parents was also strengthened through the inclusion of a parent representative on the principal selection panel. This was the first time in the history of EDWA that parents were included in the selection of the school principal. Clearly, EDWA was using new Community High Schools to introduce reforms that broadened the scope for parent and community input (and control) into schools. As Usher and Edwards suggest:

Parents are deployed to observe and judge schools although their actual presence is irrelevant to the pressures felt by the schools themselves. In panoptic fashion, they must act as though the parents are observing and judging them whether or not they are. In this sense, disciplinary power is not simply exercised through modern institutions but also over them, particularly when they are not seen to be effective in their role as disciplinary institutions.

(Usher & Edwards, 1994 :114)

The second change indicated within the position description in relationship to 'the wider community' is the expanded role that the school was to have, with respect to the provision of facilities. As we will see in chapter eight, this focus had a major impact on the design and imagined use of BCC buildings. It is clear from the description above that EDWA expected that staff at BCC would work within a broader educational field. Not only were students to be provided with 'access to a quality education' but staff at BCC were also required to provide for the 'needs' of the wider community. The inclusion of this condition (in the first sentence of paragraph 4 under the heading *School Organisation and Management*) indicates that the 'needs' of the wider community were to be fundamental concerns for BCC. The linking of the first sentence with the second, relating to 'alternative modes of curriculum delivery and flexibility in the hours of operation of

the school' implied an expanded role (and longer working hours?) for the principal and teachers. Just what 'the needs of the wider community' were, was not clearly articulated in the advertisement. There was however, a clear agenda for BCC to provide more than just sporting and recreational facilities to the broader community.

The recasting of the role of the principal defined a new school management discourse within WA. The linking of changes with 'merit-selection', performance management and flexibility resulted in the introduction of a new form of 'moral technology' (Ball, cited in Usher and Edwards, 1994: 112). The discourse of educational management now more closely reflected the cultural and values shifts occurring in the more general reforms of the government of WA relating to workplace flexibility, utilisation of capital resources and accountability. These changes were vehemently resisted by the SSTUWA, and they immediately instigated formal action to reverse the Principal appointments to BCC and Warnbro CHS.

7.2.1 SSTUWA Response to the Changing Conditions of Employment

As I suggested in earlier chapters, having successfully won the position, and taken up the principalship in the first week of July, 1994, the BCC *Think Tank* set about devising a strategic plan for the establishment of the school. At the same time, the SSTUWA was pursuing actions in the Government School Teachers' Tribunal (hereafter the Tribunal) against the conditions of the BCC principal's appointment. The SSTUWA was arguing for the continuation of existing conditions for Level Six (the most senior classification) principal appointments. They were strongly opposed to performance reviews linked with salary and renewal of tenure, and the restriction on transfer on completion of the five-year tenure, and lodged an appeal to the Tribunal. The appeal, if successful, had the potential to force EDWA to re-advertise the positions, should the Tribunal deem the conditions 'unfair'. For EDWA, changing the conditions for new principals at BCC and Warnbro was a strategy for 'testing the water' for change. For the SSTUWA, it was an attack on the existing conditions for principals and teachers, and the Union's positioning within the educational arena. The comment below from one of EDWA's officers, suggests that the risk of an industrial challenge to proposed changes was not of concern:

*Sometimes you need a test case to break the barriers
down and make a change. I think I have no, ... while*

it's frustrating and time-consuming, and so on, I have no misgivings. It doesn't concern me if having made a decision and then there's a disagreement about it. If someone wants to take the issue to the Commission to be resolved, I don't mind that, because then the boundaries are drawn. (EDWA PO1)

The EDWA officer's comments indicate that there was an understanding that a number of the initiatives being introduced at BCC, including changing the conditions of employment for principals, could result in Union opposition. His suggestion that 'while it's frustrating and time-consuming ... I have no misgivings' indicates that EDWA saw the opening of BCC and Warnbro as an opportunity to introduce major changes to the principal's role. Appeals through the Tribunal or the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission (IRC), whether planned or unplanned, were part of process of negotiating new policy directions at the State level.

The SSTUWA lodged an appeal in the Tribunal in November, 1994, some four months after the initial appointment of the principal of BCC. The central tenet of the appeal is indicated below:

The State School Teachers Union of W.A. (Inc.) ('the SSTU') is in-dispute with the Minister of Education ('the respondent') over a decision to appoint persons to positions designated 'Foundation Principals' at two new schools scheduled to open in 1995.

The schools are Warnbro Community School and Ballajura Community School¹⁵.

The SSTU claims that action of the respondent with respect to the positions is unfair in that the conditions to apply to these positions in terms of selection criteria, selection processes and conditions of employment such as tenure and transfer rights are discriminatory and inferior to the conditions of employment and rights applying to other Principals employed by the respondent.

¹⁵ The name of Ballajura Community High School was later changed to Ballajura Community College (BCC).

The SSTU seeks an order from the Government School Teachers Tribunal that the respondent's decision be overturned and that the filling of these positions be subject to the same processes and conditions as apply elsewhere within the Education Department.

The respondent denies that it has acted unfairly, objects to the issue of the order sought and seeks an order for dismissal of the claim.

(Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission
Before the Full Bench - 17 March, 1995)

There are two salient points relating to this appeal. The first is, that the SSTUWA, whilst disputing the conditions of principal appointments at BCC and Warnbro as 'unfair', 'discriminatory' and 'inferior', made no attempt to engage the new principals in any way, despite the fact that both were union members. The new principals were not encouraged to lodge appeals, or present individual documentation to support the case for equal conditions. Whilst the conditions of transfer were being called into question, it was evident from the appeal document, that the SSTUWA had a broader political agenda. They were in fact, seeking to have the appointments overturned in full, urging that the positions be filled 'using the same processes used elsewhere within the Education Department' (Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission, 17th March, 1995). 'Unfair', 'discriminating' and 'inferior' related not to concerns for the successful applicants, but rather, unsuccessful applicants, or indeed, those prospective applicants who chose not to apply because of the changes to conditions and the selection process.

The second point of importance is that EDWA was also clearly focussed on a broader policy agenda, beyond BCC and Warnbro schools. They were 'testing the boundaries' (interviewee EDWA PO1) on performance-related pay and tenured appointments to specific school sites, with **no right to transfer** to another school at the end of the tenured period. In the event that the principalships for the two new schools were overturned, the consequences for EDWA, the two school communities and incumbents would have been dire.

The outcome of the appeal resulted in the Tribunal finding that there was no reasonable case against EDWA with respect to the limited tenure of the principal positions, the additional selection criteria included in the job description, or annual performance reviews. However, on the question of transfer rights, the Chairperson of the Tribunal said:

"Put simply, if the appointees to the positions of Foundation Principal have sufficiently meritoriously discharged the duties of a Level 6 Principal for some five years, on what meritorious basis could the employer justify a reversion of status for such an employee? It may be that experience suggests that appointees to limited tenure positions, in fact, largely do not "revert" because of other opportunities which may arise. But, this prospect should not be accepted as a sufficient reason which could outweigh the case made out that an inequity exists for these appointees."
(Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission, 17th March, 1995: 1)

The Tribunal made the order 'that the respondent (EDWA) accord no less than the same transfer rights to 'Foundation Principal' at the completion of a limited tenure appointment as apply to any other person appointed substantively to a comparable position' (ibid.). There was no instruction from the Tribunal to readvertise the Foundation Principal positions.

In response to the Tribunal decision of 9th November, 1994, EDWA lodged an appeal to the Full Bench of the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission, (IRC) in February 1994. Despite having fully committed to the position of Foundation Principal at BCC, and taken up the post in the first week of July, the SSTUWA's action in the Tribunal had a significant impact on the process of establishing the school. EDWA Officers advised that there was a possibility that if EDWA lost the Appeal, the Principals' positions for BCC and Warnbro may need to be re-advertised, with traditional conditions and entitlements. There was no guarantee that the original principals' appointments would be upheld should a second selection process take place.

Vignette 7-1

Whilst at one level, I have taken the pragmatic view that if we lose our appointments I can commence my studies in London earlier, it is difficult to sustain the high levels of energy and enthusiasm required for the position, with such uncertainty. There is a particular difficulty with the community. I am constantly uncertain whether I should confide that the position of principal is uncertain, and that perhaps a replacement appointee will be made in the weeks or months to come. I am visiting local primary schools, speaking to community and parent groups and of course the students. It is a constant balancing act because there are so many unknowns. An additional worry is that I am recruiting staff under the same conditions of tenure as those of my own position, in the full knowledge that these conditions are being contested in the Tribunal. In the end, I can only focus on the strategic plan we have developed, otherwise we won't be ready for the 600 plus students on the first day.

EDWA Senior Officers approached X (my Warnbro colleague) and me suggesting that there was one way out, and that was to sign an *Individual Workplace Agreement* with EDWA.

(Larsen, Personal journal, September 17, 1994)

7.2.2 EDWA's Solution - Signing Individual Workplace Agreements

In 1993 *Workplace Agreements Legislation* was enacted in WA by the State Government. As a background to the following discussion regarding the implications of signing a Workplace Agreement, I digress slightly, to discuss the following summary provided by the State *Department of Productivity and Labour Relations* in a booklet which 'explained' the legislation. I have included 'the explanation' for two reasons. The first is to indicate the radical shifts that were occurring in WA Industrial Relations at the time of opening BCC. These changes were to result in unprecedented industrial action by teachers in

1995, the opening year for BCC. The second reason is to provide background to the implications of my signing a workplace agreement, in order to secure the position of Foundation Principal.

Figure 7-1: Features of WA Government Workplace Agreements in 1994

FEATURES OF WORKPLACE AGREEMENTS

1. **★Flexibility.** The only limits to what you can provide for in a workplace agreement are your own imagination and what the parties can agree on.
2. **★Don't have to convince a 3rd party.** Once you have agreed at the workplace all you do is file the agreement - it doesn't require approval from unions or tribunals.
3. **★Our part is simply to be satisfied that the parties have genuinely agreed - we have no say in what the parties have agreed on.**
4. **★Own arbitration system keeps disputes in house.** All agreements must have a dispute settling procedure. This tends to keep problems in-house and avoids time consuming tribunal or court hearings. There is no external arbitration system which tells you what you should or should not have in your agreement.
5. **★Select agents on merit.** Unions do not have an automatic or exclusive right to represent employees as they do under the existing award system. Under the workplace agreements system employees or employers may choose a bargaining agent, and that can be anyone, including a union. The difference is that the parties choose who they think can best help them.
6. **★Can be written by the parties.** Many awards are too complicated because they are written by Industrial relations "experts" to try and cover every situation at every workplace. Workplace agreements are written by the people who have to apply them and deal only with one particular workplace! Yours.
7. **★Minimal bureaucracy.** The Commissioner must be satisfied the agreement is understood by the parties, that nobody was forced to sign and that people genuinely Want the agreement. That is done through a visit within 2 weeks of you filing the agreement. If the agreement is an individual one, it applies from the moment it is signed so there is no delay in its operation.
8. **★Simplicity and plain language.** Agreements can be written by you and your employees, in your own language and expressions, because you are the only people who have to understand and apply it.
9. **★Fewer classifications.** With cross training and multi-skilling, several jobs can be rolled into one. That means fewer classifications and pay rates.

10. **★Sharing in cost saving.** There are many types of employee participation schemes. One company compares the outgoing costs from year to year and gives half of the improvements each year to employees as a bonus. Another employer has a scheme like a frequent flyer scheme where employees gain and lose credits towards some particular incentive or a pay rise depending on profit levels.
11. **★"Cashing up" the rate.** Many employers have dispensed with overtime, shift and weekend penalties by improving the existing rate and paying that rate whenever work is done no matter on what day or at what time.
12. **★References to awards.** Some workplace agreements import clauses or parts of existing awards while others modify or replace existing awards entirely.
13. **★Annualised or monthly hours.** Some agreements provide for an average of 160 hours per month or for annual hours with a degree of flexibility as to when those hours will be worked.
14. **★Monthly pays.** Many agreements have changed employees from weekly to monthly pays
15. **★No Fees.** There are **NO FEES**, costs or Government charges for using the workplace agreements system, or for any part of the service we provide.

(Western Australian Department of Productivity and Labour Relations, 1994: 2)

Not surprisingly, given the authors of 'the explanation', the text is clearly written to represent workplace agreements in a favourable light. The visual arrangement, with stars at the beginning of each new point and the second person address to 'you' is representative of conversational style. The reference to 'simplicity and plain language' (9) is reflected in the modality of the text, with the genre strongly reflecting that of an advertisement aimed at 'telling and selling' (Fairclough, 1992 :115).

The promotion of workplace agreements is achieved by positioning the employee as the person in control: 'The only limits to what you can provide for in a workplace agreement are your own imagination and what the parties can agree on' (1). Unlike the Teachers Award, where conditions of employment are clearly stipulated under sub-headings, and which carry legislative authority, the rhetoric of Workplace Agreements suggested 'unlimited flexibility' for employees.

There is clearly however, an underlying ideological attack on unions, and existing Awards: 'it (workplace agreement) doesn't require approval from unions or tribunals' (3), 'This tends to keep problems in-house and avoids time consuming tribunal or court hearings' (4), and (M)any awards are too complicated because they are written by industrial relations "experts" to try and cover every situation at every workplace (6). The

introduction of generic work categories (9), the change of payment for overtime (11), the linking of productivity with pay (10) and the specification of monthly and/or annual hours were all radical changes in WA's industrial relations history.

7.2.3 SSTUWA Response to Workplace Agreement Legislation

Whilst the legislative framework indicated that unions could act as agents within the negotiations of Workplace Agreements, the legislation was designed to 'write out' Unions as **automatic** participants in negotiations for salaries and conditions. As interview data with the president of the SSTUWA suggests, this was seen as a government strategy to diminish the role that unions would play in future negotiations:

R:

Now at that time of Warnbro and Ballajura we were under the greatest threat for the Union that we've ever been under.

You know, the Government not only wanted to not have anything to do with us, they were looking for every way and means to either marginalise us totally, or even deregister us.

Um, they wanted teachers on contract. Um, they wanted um, local selection of staff, where the principal was choosing staff and so on. Well that was seen as a whole threat to the promotion and transfer system with no negotiation.

So the whole series of government, of political factors that were impinging on people where people were saying well these people are not really interested in reform.

They're interested in economic rationalism. They're interested in devolution at the most rapid rate they most possibly can and to remove government responsibility away from education.

Well, we had no alternative but to come out and fight that.

JL: Yeah

R: But it was unfortunate that Ballajura and Warnbro were occurring at that particular time.

(SSTUWA 1)

Until the change in government in 1993, the SSTUWA had a positive working relationship with EDWA and were involved in consultative committees and working parties as part of policy changes. At the time of the change of government, things changed dramatically for the Union. The modus operandi was to be significantly different, with the Union being viewed, not as a major participant in the change agenda, but rather as another 'stakeholder'. From the point of view of the Union, this change had radical implications for the changes that were being initiated at BCC and was viewed as a dramatic change to the way business had previously been carried out by EDWA:

Certainly it (the opening of BCC) came at a time ...when the Conservative Government was elected that ah the push was on, to totally exclude the Union from all decision making and all committees that historically had occurred. ...

And while, when we protested, the Government's view was that we were only just another stakeholder and once the decisions had been made ah ... then the Union would be consulted and those considerations may or may not be taken notice of. It was a totally different way of doing business than what we'd done in the past.

(SSTUWA 1)

For the SSTUWA, BCC represented a challenge to established traditions. The implementation of a new recruitment policy without consultation and prior approval from the Union reflected many of the changes occurring within the wider political arena. Ministers from other government departments were pursuing more tightly controlled reform agendas without prior consultation with unions. These changes had been reflected in local press reports, including *The Western Teacher*, the SSTUWA monthly newspaper, with headlines such as 'Industry canes (Ministers) Moore and Hill over total lack of

consultation' (SSTUWA, 1994 (September) :2). The SSTUWA's opposition to BCC was cast as a fight for survival.

7.2.4 Ideological Dilemmas

Vignette 7-2

I have just returned from the meeting with EDWA Senior Officers, regarding the signing of the Workplace Agreement in order to halt the SSTUWA action in the Industrial Relations Commission. Whilst at one level it would be an enormous relief to know that my position as Principal of BCC is secure, I cannot accept the ideology of Workplace Agreements. This is a huge dilemma for me. I am both senior employee of EDWA and a member of the SSTUWA.

The meeting with five Senior Officers, including a Senior Industrial Relations Officers was stressful, to say the least, not because we were in any way intimidated but because I was on unfamiliar territory. We (my counterpart from Warnbro and a senior secondary principal who attended at our invitation as a support) sat opposite the five EDWA Officers. We were given some background about the rationale for proposing a Workplace Agreement - principally to reduce the opportunity for the 'derailing of our positions' and to halt the action in the IRC. The discussion centred on finding a solution to the 'problem'. A suggestion was made by one EDWA Officer that we enter into a 'holding pattern Workplace Agreement', (I'm not sure what this is, and haven't ever heard of this before) which would incorporate the three major changes to standard secondary school principals' appointments. After lengthy discussions, we were given the following three options: a) wait for a decision and 'take your chances', b) enter into a 'holding pattern Workplace Agreement or c) 'trailblaze' a Workplace

Agreement. EDWA Officers gave us an undertaking that they would provide us with a 'Draft' Workplace Agreement by the weekend.

We (my colleagues and I) left the meeting with an agreement that we would consider the options and await the arrival of the Draft Workplace Agreement.

There are a number of difficulties with the decision. At this stage, the question is, would I sign the Workplace Agreement if the remuneration was sizeable? My ideological dilemmas also centre on my impatience with EDWA at the apparent lack of planning in the lead up to these changes. Despite being in the position for four months, my status is still uncertain. I will await the delivery of the Workplace Agreement.

(Larsen Journal Entry: 25th October, 1994)

The proposal from EDWA that the new principals sign a workplace agreement to secure their positions at BCC and Warnbro Community High School, typifies the ideological dilemmas (Billig et al., 1988) and the controlling forces that impacted on me as newly appointed principal of BCC. As a new principal I was keen to demonstrate that I was 'capable' and 'committed'. I had been firmly enculturated into the discourse of 'effective and efficient' management and recognised that the disruption to the principal's position would have a major impact on the establishment of the school. Clearly, the wording of the options 'wait for a decision and take your chances' (of losing the position), b) enter into a 'holding pattern' Workplace Agreement or c) 'trailblaze' a Workplace Agreement, indicated a preference by EDWA Officers to sign the Workplace Agreement. 'Trailblazing' has all the connotations of innovation¹⁶: BCC was an innovative school, I was an innovative principal and 'trailblazing' a workplace agreement was an innovative

¹⁶ The Concise Oxford Dictionary (CD-Rom,) suggests that a 'trailblazer' 'is a person who marks a new track through wild country, a pioneer, an innovator'.

solution. Whilst there was no direct coercion, the subtlety of the power of the argument is evident. As Foucault says:

What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body.

(Foucault, in Rabinow, 1986 :61)

I received the *Draft Workplace Agreement* from EDWA several days after the meeting. Unlike the *Features of Workplace Agreements*, it was highly formal, and contained no additional entitlements. All original advertised conditions were written into the agreement. I decided to decline the offer and live with the uncertainty of losing the principal's position.

The outcome of the IRC hearing resulted in the upholding of transfer rights, as conferred by the Tribunal. The terms and conditions for transfer for the Ballajura and Warnbro principal positions were to be those which were standard entitlements to all government secondary school, level six principals.

For EDWA, the strategy to change the conditions of employment of principals without the approval of the SSTUWA was a 'test case'. Clearly, the agenda was far greater than the issue at hand. EDWA and the government were indicating to the SSTUWA that there was a new way of doing business, in relationship to changing teachers' and principals' pay and conditions. This new relationship involved the recasting of the union **out of** the process of industrial negotiations. The fact that it could potentially (and did) lead to industrial disagreement was obviously a calculated risk. In the words of the EDWA Officer interviewed for this study, the strategy was used to 'break the barriers down' and 'draw the boundaries for change' (EDWA PO1). Changing policy in this context gave rise to contestations, beyond closed doors. Formal appeals in the Tribunal and the IRC were public conflicts requiring arbitration at the highest levels. Within the 'Context of influence' (Bowe et al., 1992 :284) contestations arose within and around the bureaucracy, and within and around the legislative process.

Vignette 7-3

Reading through the IRC Report I have mixed feelings relating to the outcome. It is interesting to witness the political machinations associated with our appointments, and particularly to read the evidence presented by EDWA Officers to the Tribunal, in defence of the advertised conditions (5 year contract, and no right to transfer to equivalent schools). Whilst fully aware of the conditions relating to non-transfer rights as part of the principal's position at BCC when I applied for the position, the issue of inequity, as described within the IRC Report, and the various defences proposed by EDWA representatives are telling. It is only now that I realise the full implications of the conditions of my appointment and the vulnerable situation I could have been in, had I signed the Workplace Agreement.

(Larsen, Personal journal, 18 March, 1995)

In analysing the data, it is only 'from a distance' that the processes of redefining the principal's role at BCC can really be understood. The paradox is that the discourses of 'flexibility', 'performance' and 'self-management' were infused into the role of the principal. Power and control did not operate in a coercive way. I was a knowing and willing applicant for the role of principal, and as I said in chapter one, excited by the possibilities that the role would offer. I was also fully supportive of many of the initiatives EDWA was suggesting for BCC. My own biographical history orientated me towards change and within the context of the new position, improving education for young adolescents. What is clear from the analysis is that I was both an 'active knowing subject and an object being acted upon' (Usher & Edwards, 1994 :94) within the changing educational management discourses of WA. As a new principal, I was bound up in the

emerging discourses, simultaneously navigating the tensions arising from the contestations occurring in the broader educational and political arenas.

In the next section, I discuss the introduction of school-based merit selection at BCC. The analysis demonstrates that the recasting of the principal's role for BCC dramatically changed the relationship between principals and teachers in WA. For the first time in WA government schools, principals were the employers of teachers. In the analysis I demonstrate that the implementation of this policy resulted in a range of contestations, which arose from competing interests and ideologies. I also suggest that whilst EDWA had an over-riding interest in school-based staff selection, the implementation of the policy was undertaken within an arena of uncertainty and 'ad hocery' (Ball, 1994a).

7.3 Site-Based Merit Selection of Staff at BCC

The opening of BCC and Warnbro CHS heralded a new period for EDWA with respect to school staff appointments. In this section I provide an analysis of the formulation and implementation of policy relating to the recruitment of staff for BCC. I argue that whilst EDWA had a strong agenda for change, and situated this agenda within a discourse of educational innovation, the policy was in fact linked to expanding the control and surveillance mechanisms for teachers in WA. I also argue that the newly defined role of principal under the discourse of self-management, had direct influence on the reshaping of teachers' roles at BCC, and ultimately, within WA.

In The *Education Circular* of September 1994, EDWA called for *Expressions of Interest* from teachers to be 'merit selected' for teaching appointments in nine primary and secondary schools. Six of the nine schools, including BCC were new schools, scheduled to open for the 1995 school year. The *Flexibility in Schooling Project* was the vehicle through which the changes to teacher recruitment would occur. The advertisement was significant, in that it was the first public statement by EDWA, of the intention to proceed with 'merit selection' of teachers.

Figure 7-2: Seeking Expressions of Interest for Teaching Positions in EDWA's 1995 Flexibility in Schooling Project

- Expression of Interest**
1. Flexibility in Schooling Project Selected School Transfer 1995 - Teaching Positions
 2. Under the Flexibility in Schooling Project (FISP) the following schools have negotiated that teacher vacancies for the 1995 school year will be on the basis of merit selection by the individual school.
 3. The process applied by schools will conform to the Equal Employment Opportunity Act.
 4. Expressions of interest are called for any teaching positions which may occur at the following schools:
 5. Ballajura CHS* Bridgetown HS Halls Head PS* Kinross PS* KooranaPS Merriwa PS* Sawyers Valley PS* Warnbro CHS* Withers PS *New School 1995 A school initiated teacher selection process will:
 6. enable schools to develop selection criteria appropriate to the particular vacancy.
 7. enable increased flexibility for individual schools to apply the "merit selection" process so as to attract teachers who can demonstrate a commitment to that school's needs and purpose.
 8. enable a better match between the programs delivered by the school and the skills required of the individual teacher.

(EDWA, 1994b:8)

In analysing the text, there are a number of points that can be made. In the first instance, the layout and presentation of the article is important. It is structured in a relatively unimposing format, with the only bold print, being that of the title and the framing. The margins are uneven, the print cluttered and the format untidy. For example, the flow on from the list of schools (5) to 'A school initiated ...' has no visual or grammatical separation.

The call for *Expression of Interest* suggests that the initiative for merit selection has been **instigated** by the listed schools - 'the following **schools have negotiated**' (2) and '**A school initiated** teacher selection process ...' (5). Whether the structuring of the advertisement intentionally placed 'schools' (Principals) at the forefront of the change in order to deflect attention away from EDWA or not, is difficult to ascertain. What is evident however, is the absence of any mention of teachers other than in (7). In this context, teachers are linked to those 'who can demonstrate a commitment to that school's needs and purposes'. Teachers are implied, in the nominalised 'teacher vacancies' (2), however in the remainder of the advertisement, the emphasis is on what merit selection will do for 'schools'. What the advertisement points to, is the newly ascribed power and control given to principals under the new selection process. Whilst 'schools' are implicated as the vehicle through which selection criteria will be developed (6), and 'increased flexibility' to be achieved (7) 'for a better match between programs delivered' (8), the key responsibility for undertaking merit selection, was to rest entirely with the principal. For the first time in WA, teachers were required to 'demonstrate a commitment' to the school (principal), in order to be considered for appointment.

EDWA was using the *FISP*, a national project, previously negotiated with the SSTUWA, to change the relationship between teachers and principals in WA. Teachers would have to 'apply' for positions and 'demonstrate' particular skills, including a 'commitment' to the school, in order to be considered for appointment. Whilst the SSTUWA originally agreed to the implementation of the *FISP* the project was never advertised nor intended as the vehicle for changing the employment practices for teachers.

Like the merit selection of the principal of BCC, the merit selection of teachers was a radical policy change. Teachers had previously been appointed to schools throughout the State through a centralised process that was not contingent on demonstrations of ability, or demonstrations of commitment to a particular school. At BCC, the principal was to have the power to select staff on merit, and to use the selection process as a technology of control. Ongoing 'performance management', would be used to 'discipline' teachers in the same way that superintendents were to 'discipline' principals. Teachers were initially appointed to BCC for two years with an option of reapplying for

their positions at the end of the two-year period. In the event that teachers were considered unsuitable for 'the school', then contracts would be 'reviewed' and perhaps, 'not renewed'. As Ball (1994a), suggests, '(T)he manager's autonomy becomes the teacher's constraint' (p.62).

The location of this advertisement, on page eight of the Education Circular, and its unimposing format could well have been motivated by an awareness by EDWA that the initiative would result in a huge backlash from the SSTUWA. It was a necessary process, but not one that was going to be announced with large headlines and front page positioning.

7.3.1 The SSTUWA's Reaction to Site Based Merit Selection of Teachers

The SSTUWA responded immediately to the *Expression of Interest* advertisement in its monthly newspaper, with an article appearing on page two, from the President. This article, (I will refer to it as 'The Demise article') (see Appendix 6, p. 321) appeared in the September, 1994 edition of the SSTUWA newspaper, *The Western Teacher*. The article illustrates the strong opposition from the SSTWA to the proposed changes to staffing procedures in Western Australian government schools. The layout and location (on the second page) of the article signal its importance. The article is framed in bold continuous border, and has the title 'FROM The President, Brian Lindberg THE DEMISE OF PERMANENCY, PROMOTION AND TRANSFER'. The compositional structure of the article has a number of framed parts, each of which influences the reading. The photograph of the president in the top left-hand corner is framed with the words 'Act One' written below. This article signalled the beginning of the longest and most disruptive industrial action in the history of Western Australian education, which extended for all of 1995, the first year of operation for BCC.

In the top right hand corner, framed in a lighter bold border, and directly below the headlines, is a copy of the advertisement for *Expressions of Interest* from teachers from EDWA's monthly magazine, 'Education Circular'. The framing serves to disconnect (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1990) 'The President' from 'the Department'. Kress (1994b :41) suggests that the position of components of newspaper articles serve different semiotic functions and carry different status. Left-most position carries the meaning of 'established', 'uncontentious', 'known', 'taken for granted'" (Kress, *ibid.*). Right-most

positioning carries the meaning of 'the new'. The positioning of 'the Department' on the right signals 'the new way' for recruitment of teachers in WA.

The photograph of the President on the top left-hand corner 'addresses teachers'; he is looking directly at the camera and smiling: asking teachers to enter into a 'conversation' with him (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996 :123). The article is written in first person, and the President 'talks' to teachers, and later to Mr Black, the Chief Executive Officer of EDWA and to the Education Minister, Mr. Moore. The article contains a number of narratives which link to the non-narrative sections, (Fairclough, 1999) which argue that local selection of teachers will lead to 'The Demise of Permanency, Promotion and Transfer' in the State education system.

The President begins by outlining the context and details of his recent request to the Australian Education Union Federal Executive for the withdrawal of funding for WA's *Flexibility in Schooling Project*. His suggestion was that EDWA was 'misusing a Federal Government initiative to fundamentally undermine teacher and administration working conditions' through the implementation of local staff selection. Throughout the article, Brian Lindberg enlists the support of fellow union members to oppose local selection, through carefully constructed and selected narratives. These are interspersed with negative assertions (**Demise, undermine, Despite these talks, not only was the Department proceeding, the Education Department is not prepared to wait, create further disruption and disharmony,**) in order to take issue with EDWA and to establish an adversarial position.

The President used the collective pronoun 'we' seven times, to establish solidarity: *Yet again we will use the Industrial Relations Commission, it is especially repugnant as we were all promised by the Minister, let me tell you we don't want it, we do not expect to be treated* Solidarity is further strengthened through direct address to 'members', on two occasions. The first is when he states 'Members, this is nothing but devolution via the backdoor. It is especially repugnant as we were all promised by the Minister that there would be no further devolution until the Hoffman Committee has reported'. The second direct address to 'members' is in the final paragraph, where the President makes the claim: *'Members, please keep yourselves fully informed of the above matters, discuss the issues at your branch meetings and what action you will be prepared to support'*.

The president argues that the SSTUWA has repeatedly tried negotiating with EDWA, in fact 'insisted on urgent talks with the Department' and yet, '(D)espite these talks the Department ignored the Union's request for a negotiated and agreed position'. An adversarial position is strengthened by the use of military metaphors. The military metaphor, used in the paragraph relating to the first meeting in July, in which the President recounts his proposal that the '*SSTUWA would blow any such proposal out of the water*' is later echoed in the expectations held of the Director General 'to *fight* for the profession, *fight* for our professional rights, *fight* for appropriate conditions and *fight* for quality education'.

Throughout the article, the President refers to public and private domains, strengthening the argument that the move to local selection would undermine established conditions for teachers. He refers to the fact that teachers in the Ballajura area have already 'put up with overcrowding in schools', and 'some have even purchased houses in locations near to new schools'.

The theme of the article suggests that the SSTUWA wanted to negotiate with EDWA on certain reforms, however EDWA had reneged on previous commitments to collaborate on any new initiatives and '(D)espite these talks the Department **ignored** the Union's request for a negotiated and agreed position and continued with the appointments'.

This article, published in the SSTUWA newspaper had a major impact on the teaching force in WA. It was the beginning of a year-long industrial campaign which included 'work to rule' and strikes. For BCC and the other schools implementing EDWA's local selection initiatives, it set the scene for continued hostility and ostracism.

Vignette 7-4

My husband and I decided to go to a small coastal town for a complete break away from work - a romantic week end - long walks on the beach, a relaxed meal and time to catch up. I had been working late nights and early mornings for longer than I wanted to admit and thought the break away would do us both good. It was Saturday morning and we had only just arrived

after the two-hour drive. A cup of coffee was in order. We walked down the street, talking inevitably about school.

It happened like a bolt. I was so taken aback. A tall middle aged man approached me in the street, stood before me, vitriolic in his attack. "You must feel great, having undermined every Western Australian teacher's working conditions. What you are doing at Ballajura is going to undermine everything that we've fought for. This merit selection is disgusting and by being part of it you are wrecking the systems that have worked for years. We talked about it at our union meeting last week. You're a disgrace to the profession". With that he walked off.

My husband and I stood there stunned. I realised I was shaking and suggested we miss the coffee and go to our hotel. I wanted to retreat to the security of home. The romantic weekend suddenly paled into oblivion. I was conscious of the Union's campaign against the school, although I had not really internalised it in my day to day business.

(Larsen, Personal journal, October 20, 1994)

Clearly, the advice from the President, for teachers to discuss the proposed changes in their Union meetings, and consider what action they would take, had been acted upon. The hostility towards my Warnbro colleague and myself was relentless, at both personal and public levels.

While much of the literature about policy (Dye, 1984; Taylor et al., 1997) suggests that in the 'ideal setting', policy-making begins with a distinct problem, through stages of formulation, implementation and evaluation, there is evidence that in many cases the process is far more untidy (Ball, 1994a). Certainly the data indicates that whilst the Government and EDWA had committed to the policy of employment reforms, and actively pursued this proposal, it was not until the policy was 'tested' at BCC and a number of other schools, that many of the ramifications of this policy became apparent.

The lack of strategic planning meant that critical decisions relating to industrial and practical issues were not dealt with until a 'crisis' appeared.

Many of the changes that were initiated at BCC and Warnbro were considered by the Union as having the potential to erode many of the hard-earned conditions which teachers had fought to secure. Site-based merit selection, the curriculum and devolution were all identified as major issues by the president of the Union. The concerns related to the long-standing homogeneity of the system, which had been secured through centralised practices of staff appointment and curriculum initiatives to which the Union had been party:

Part of our view over the last 100 years is we want to ensure that every child has access to quality education um.. that is Government funded, that is a quality education ah and ensures those guarantees across the entire state.

Now I think we've been fairly successful with that - that you can go anywhere within the State and you see a reasonable standard ah, both in buildings and resourcing and ah experience of teachers - it's not perfect but we've always built on that, and tried to ah, to ensure that occurs.

Now what we were concerned about was that this, the potential for this was, every school could end up advertising for their own staff which is fine if you're in the nice leafy-green suburbs of Perth and in favourable country locations, but in the final analysis, what does Meekatharra¹⁷ do, to attract and retain highly experienced and well qualified teachers?

(SSTUWA 1)

Throughout the interview with the President of the SSTUWA, he consistently indicated concern at the changes to the political landscape, suggesting that the change in government had changed the scope and opportunity for participation of the Union in the direction of EDWA and that:

It was a staggering blow I suppose, to me, to be elected and then for the Government to start kicking the Union in the teeth and saying we want nothing to do with the Union. (SSTUWA 1)

Whilst acknowledging that the centralised system of promotions and transfers 'doesn't work', the President indicated that the previous system ensured that 'people who had done the right thing by the Department' and gone to the country to get their permanency should rightly expect a metropolitan appointment. For the SSTUWA, the concern was that the introduction of school-based merit selection had the potential to erode the conditions of permanency:

You just don't suddenly change a system without looking at how it fits in with everybody. And we certainly saw Warnbro and Ballajura as being um .. the Government using those two circumstances in highly favourable locations - like new buildings and um .. to attract and retain the staff that the administrators may want within the school.

But how does that .. what effect is that going to have on the rest of the system. And we were told - well this is the way to go because the Government doesn't believe in permanency.

Ah ... now that's always been another one of our .. our staples I suppose, that teachers should be able to go about their business without fear that um ... you know .. with that security of tenure. Because if you feel secure then you're more likely to go out and do a better job with your teaching. (SSTUWA 1)

When asked to comment about the opportunities afforded to temporary teachers, who for the first time in EDWA's history were granted two-year tenures with the opening of Warnbro and BCC, the President of the SSTUWA suggested that the previous

¹⁷ Meekatharra is an isolated country town on the edge of the desert, with a large aboriginal population.

agreement by the Union, for country service to be linked to permanency and metropolitan appointments was 'a fatal mistake'. He further added,

We should never have agreed that permanency and metropolitan jobs would be based on mobility. We should never ... in the past we should never have agreed to it. (SSTUWA 1)

The historical arrangements were considered more suitable, despite the fact that they were viewed as 'a mistake'. The later arrangement where teachers accumulated points according to the school 'type' with a heavier weighting being allocated to 'more difficult' schools had created what The President termed 'a bottleneck'. This caused difficulties for mobility both between country and metropolitan locations and across the metropolitan area. The alternative of merit selection, as introduced at Warnbro and BCC was considered non viable however, as it was viewed as the first step to removing permanency of tenure:

R:

The problem for us with regard to Warnbro and Ballajura was that we saw that, limited tenure, rather than resolve the problems that there are with not granting permanency and temporary teachers, um, we saw that as the first step to getting people away from permanency - putting people on contracts.

Now at that time of Warnbro and Ballajura we were under the greatest threat for the Union that we've ever been under.

You know, the Government not only wanted to not have anything to do with us, they were looking for every way and means to either marginalise us totally, or even de-register us.

Um, they wanted teachers on contract. Um, they wanted um, local selection of staff, where the principal was choosing staff and so on. Well that was seen as a whole threat to the promotion and transfer system with no negotiation.

So the whole series of government, of political factors that were impinging on people where people were saying well these people are not really interested in reform.

They're interested in economic rationalism. They're interested in devolution at the most rapid rate they most possibly can and to remove government responsibility away from education.

Well, we had no alternative but to come out and fight that.

JL: Yeah

R: But it was unfortunate that Ballajura and Warnbro were occurring at that particular time.

(SSTUWA 1)

7.3.2 Implementing the Merit Selection Policy at BCC

Against the backdrop of an extremely hostile industrial climate the task of recruiting staff for BCC presented enormous difficulties because in the early planning stages, it became clear that whilst EDWA had a clear intention to introduce this policy, there was no clear framework nor budget for implementation. Prior to the opening of BCC, all staff selection had been undertaken at the central level through *The Selection Unit* and EDWA *staffing branches*. This included the writing of advertisements, the processing of applications, the sifting, short-listing and interviewing of applicants, and the writing of feed back reports for each applicant.

Vignette 7-5

I have just realised the enormous task ahead of me, in managing the selection of staff for BCC. While the Selection Unit at Central Office is happy to advise and support, it appears there are no processes in place to assist with the recruitment of staff for BCC. With over forty positions, including teachers, administrative staff, gardeners, and ancillary staff, the task

ahead will be monumental. There are job descriptions to be written, advertisements to be placed, selection panels to be convened and an entire infrastructure to be established to receive, review and provide feed back for each applicant. It seems that EDWA has no formal policy in place concerning site-based merit selection. We are still negotiating with EDWA staffing officers the conditions of appointment for temporary teachers, primary and secondary teachers on the same site and issues associated with merit selection and transfer rights. The Union is publicly hostile and the challenge in the Tribunal regarding the principal's position may have ramifications for promotional and teaching positions at the school.

(Larsen, Personal journal, August 19, 1994)

Without staff to assist in the initial stages or a budget to employ additional staff, the task of recruiting in excess of forty staff was enormous. In response to the initial *Expression of Interest*, in excess of two hundred applications were received for teaching positions at BCC. My colleague at Warnbro and I, established procedures, shared information and collaborated on staffing profiles for each of the 'new schools'. At the same time, there were critical industrial issues that had not been addressed by EDWA. These concerned:

- the recruitment of primary and secondary teachers at the one school (primary teachers have different industrial entitlements to secondary teachers);
- the employment of temporary teachers on tenure (previously temporary teachers had been used to fill positions after permanent teachers had been placed, and had only been given short term appointments for up to one year), and
- the introduction of new positions (such as Team Leaders, technology manager) to reflect the new approach to curriculum and the priorities of the school.

Each of these changes required extended negotiations with EDWA officers in order to proceed. We were working with very short time lines, in a hostile industrial

climate with limited support, juggling the practical demands of setting up the school, whilst reassuring parents that the schools would be built, equipped and staffed for the first day of the 1995 school year.

Despite the fact that site-based selection was to be a policy priority for EDWA, there is evidence that there was limited preparation for the process. There was a clear indication that policy makers responsible for the decision underestimated the amount of time and effort required in establishing procedures at the school level to enact this policy. The comment from one EDWA officer working in the Staffing Directorate indicates the extent to which there was limited planning for the implementation of merit selection of teachers:

There hadn't been any strategic planning, there hadn't been a needs analysis, hadn't been any attention given to resourcing levels. Um ... I reckon your first 18 months, 6 months getting the school ready to go and the first 12 months, was policy on the sprint. It wasn't policy on the run. ... It was policy on the sprint. I don't think that due attention was given to the demands of school-based staff selection, and that's a real issue for schools at the moment. ... I don't think we realised what you had been put through at Ballajura. (EDWA PO1)

What is evident from the above quotation is that the process of policy implementation of merit selection at BCC was 'sorted out' through the process of enactment. The broader political agenda was the primary concern for EDWA policy makers. The operationalising of the policy became a matter for the principals of the schools involved.

7.4 School Level Effects

Notwithstanding the difficulties associated with the implementation of new employment practices, at the school level, the opportunity to select staff who were expressly interested in exploring innovative practices was considered critical to the implementation of the Ethos and Philosophy of the school. Teachers who came to BCC were clearly aware of

the priority to introduce middle schooling as well as the commitment to trialing new and innovative curricular structures. They were choosing to teach at the school, expressed an interest in change and innovation and an excitement at the possibility of participating in establishing a new middle school at Ballajura. It would have been an impossible leadership task and teaching situation to open the school with teachers who were there under duress.

School based merit selection at BCC also gave teachers some measure of control over their teaching appointments. They were able to specify the school as their choice of workplace rather than find themselves in other schools that may not have suited their preferences, either in terms of location, or educational philosophy. The previous centralised employment practices meant that temporary teachers had limited scope for choosing the school at which they taught and they lunged from one year to the next, with no guarantee of employment. They were subjected to the vagaries of government policies, new graduate influxes and all of the attendant uncertainties and vulnerabilities associated with lack of continuity of employment. At BCC, for the first time temporary teachers had tenure for a period of two years, with the option of renewal at the end of this period. Temporary teachers experienced a greater level of certainty at BCC. The limited tenure appointments meant that they were guaranteed appointments for the duration of the tenure, rather than experiencing termination of appointment at the end of each school year.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter has provided information relating to how changes in employment practices at the State level, impacted on the establishment of BCC. In Chapter six I demonstrated that from the earliest meetings of the Steering Committee there was a strong agenda for recruiting teachers at BCC under new conditions. Because the school was advertised as 'new and innovative' EDWA policy officers were able to advance the claim for 'specially selected principal and teachers'. Changes to employment practices at BCC signalled an ideological shift for EDWA and the government, which focussed on the redefinition of the roles of principals and teachers under a new regime of control and surveillance, through performance management linked to tenure. The chapter illustrates the

contestations that arose as a result of the changes to industrial relations at the time of opening BCC. It is evident that there were a number of controls exerted by both EDWA and the SSTUWA in the implementation of new employment policies at BCC. The policy process was one that was contested in multiple arenas: in the press, through arbitration and in individual meetings. The analysis also demonstrates the policy confusion that arose from the absence of an EDWA strategic plan for the implementation of merit-selection.

That said, it is clear from the data that EDWA policy makers were committed to increasing the flexibility for individual schools to determine the profile of teachers - to get a 'best fit' of staff to the school. In making the transition from a highly centralised model of staff appointments to one that reflected a more 'suitable' match, EDWA policy makers were caught in the bind of testing the boundaries (both organisationally and legislatively) in order to establish new ground rules for the implementation of site-based merit selection to individual schools.

The origins of these policy changes are not clearly evident. As I indicated in Chapter two, many of the proposed changes were circulated in the broader educational arena at the time. Brian Caldwell for example, had visited WA and advanced the merits of work of David Hargreaves who at the time, was suggesting that schools for the twenty first century should:

Have a core of full-time, highly trained professional teachers, on five-year renewable contracts, supported by a range of assistant teachers and part-time teachers who also work in other fields;
Contract out substantial parts of their teaching functions, so that secondary pupils spend less of their time in school;
Be permeable to their community, to business and the world of working adults, so that the boundaries between school and the outside world weaken.
(Hargreaves, 1994: 53-54 cited in Caldwell, 1997 :69)

Reading Caldwell now, I have strong recollections of his presentation to a room full of principals and senior policy makers in WA. The words resonate loudly and clearly carry intertextual links to policies that were being proposed and implemented at the time

of opening BCC. As a further example of the interpenetration of new discourses, I quote Caldwell (1997) again:

The concept of teaching as *the job* is likely to change, as it will in every field of public and private endeavour, so that a range of professional and para-professional staff will serve the school, some in a more or less permanent core, and an increasing number in contractual, temporary or part-time arrangements. New reward schemes will be required, for traditional career paths and rewards based on advancement in a hierarchy will disappear. Reward in such schemes will be based on performance, including the performance of teams. (ibid.:74)

I am not suggesting that Brain Caldwell was the architect of the policies that were being implemented at BCC. I am suggesting that Caldwell's presentations were but one of the multitude of texts that permeated the Western Australian policy arena. Caldwell himself was drawing intertextually on other texts (such as those proposed by David Hargreaves in England) and these texts were then mediated and transformed within the social and historical context of WA. It is clear that EDWA was engaged in a radical reshaping of principals' and teachers' work through policies that reflected changes occurring in other countries (Ozga, 2000). It is also clear that the discourses of 'community participation' were being appropriated as part of the broader change agenda. As I demonstrated in Chapter six, notions of 'community' varied, according to the context in which they were being used. Like other terms such as 'flexibility' and 'choice' they were woven into the 'lacework of meaning' (Seddon, 1996 :52), imbricated in other policies in order to redefine the role of teachers and the community.

The textual realisations of these changes were intricately woven into the design of the school. The following chapter demonstrates how the school buildings were a critical feature of the ongoing semiosis directed at naturalising new concepts of middle schooling (with all the attendant implications for teachers' work) and 'community' into the structure of Western Australian secondary schooling.

Chapter Eight

The Semiotics of BCC Buildings

8.1 Introduction

In the previous two chapters I have demonstrated that change and innovation were imbricated in a number of policies that were implemented for the first time at BCC. It is evident from the data that discursive changes occurred intertextually, and as such, influenced and shaped policy in a number of areas. Given that the buildings represented a major focus for change and innovation at BCC I turn now to an analysis of the influences and controls exerted on the design and construction of the school. My contention is that if we are to investigate a school that was built for the twenty-first century then we must necessarily ponder the very materiality of 'the secondary school'. I suggest that the very naming of BCC - **Ballajura Community College**, with the subtitles of 'middle school' and 'Community College', carried with it, critical messages about the 'semiotic event' (Kress, 1997b) of schooling and that these messages were aimed at strengthening the policy changes that have been discussed above.

The purpose of this chapter is to trace the discursive changes that occurred in respect of the buildings, in order to illustrate how the boundaries of secondary schooling were contested and changed to incorporate 'middle schooling' and the notion of 'community'. The analysis draws specifically on BCC architectural drawing and blueprints, policy documents and interview data. Throughout the chapter, I draw on the work of Kress (1997a) and Fairclough (1995) to demonstrate how historical meanings and traditions exerted controls and influenced the practical realisation of change and innovation in the BCC buildings. These controls, materialised in discourses, texts and practices intersected with discourses of 'change and innovation'. I also draw on Foucault's construct of genealogy and Gramsci's (1971) notion of hegemony in order to frame parts of the discussion. Genealogy offers a useful framework for analysing architectural arrangements at BCC, because it focuses attention on the discursive struggles associated with challenging legitimising policies that traditionally underscored the building of secondary schools in WA. The concept of hegemony provides a model for understanding

the means through which change is reflected in and through discourse. Working from a dialectical view of structure/event (Fairclough, 1995 :73) I suggest that the building of BCC was shaped by existing discourses, but also contributed to the reshaping and transformation of these same discourses. Fairclough suggests that the constructive effects of discourse work in three distinct ways:

Firstly, discourse contributes to the construction of 'social identities' and 'subject positions' for social 'subjects' and types of 'self'. ... Secondly, discourse helps construct social relationships between people. And thirdly, discourse contributes to the construction of systems of knowledge and belief.

(Fairclough, 1992 :64)

Fairclough (ibid.) further posits that these three effects closely parallel the three metafunctions proposed by Halliday (1978) - the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual, which 'coexist and interact' (Fairclough, op.cit.) in all meaning making. Both Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) and O'Toole (1994), whose work is strongly influential in this chapter, draw on Halliday's metafunctions in proposing a social semiotic theory of communication.

The chapter is organised into four parts. In the first part, I describe how school buildings are inscribed with meanings and how these meanings prescribe ways of being, ways of seeing the world and ways of constructing the secondary schooling experience. I make reference to the traditional arrangements and plans for the building of secondary schools used in the period prior to building BCC to illustrate the complexity of changing established arrangements in order to reconceptualise new forms of secondary schooling.

Secondly, I examine the influence of EDWA policies relating not only to buildings, (e.g. ratios of space per subject per student, undercover space, specialist buildings and facilities), but also curriculum documents and equipment lists. In this section I argue that these policy documents underscored the pedagogical practices imagined within the spaces of the school. I make reference to these documents because they demonstrate the complex web of policies that work in concert to sediment hegemonic traditions in secondary schools. In this discussion I make reference to the

curriculum area, *Technology and Enterprise* which was undergoing a radical reshaping at the time of opening BCC.

Thirdly, I draw on the data to illustrate how the process of changing the architectural designs at BCC changed the signs of their practical functions. This discussion focuses on the meaning potential of the architectural drawings. How did the architects and EDWA planners of BCC inscribe meanings beyond the practical or functional or traditional and make decisions about what O'Toole (1994) calls 'systems of semiotic options' (p.85)? How did they select and combine different materials and spatial configurations to incorporate policy changes occurring within the educational and political arenas of the time relating to middle schooling and community participation? My purpose is to demonstrate how these changing policy emphases were incorporated into the architectural drawings of BCC, and how the realisation of these drawings contributed to the textual construction of new notions of secondary schooling, including a redefinition of teachers' work and the role of the community within the school.

The fourth section of the chapter includes an overview of the discussion, and the implications for change at BCC.

8.2 Schools as Semiotic Spaces

In reading Gunther Kress's (1997b: 4) description of a high baroque church service in southern Germany I was struck not just by the power of the description, but by the theoretical construct - 'a semiotic event ...which attempts to engage the body through all its sensory means ... it is an experience in which not one mode or sense is privileged. It is a total and totalizing event' (*ibid.*). Having spent many years in a church boarding school I had an overwhelming recollection of the early morning benedictions and mass, the fasting, the genuflection, the spaces and the infusion of sounds and sights and smells and locations, situated within my body. In my reflections, I could not however resist drawing a parallel between Kress's description of a high baroque church and a secondary school, any secondary school, in WA or England or the US. My contention here is that secondary schools are typically laden with a wide range of meanings. Implicit in the notion of secondary schools are ideas about the spaces, the objects likely to be seen and the events which are likely to take place.

If we apply Kress's theory of social semiotics to a secondary science classroom, in Australia, England, the US (and probably elsewhere), most people would carry preconceived ideas about the teacher, where she (or probably he) might stand, the type of language she/he might use, the textbooks, the activities and the assessments. It is likely that most people would also have a 'conventional image' (Lakoff, 1987 :446) of the physical appearance of the classroom, where students may stand, walk and sit; how the 'work' of 'doing science' would look.

Like the high baroque church, 'the spatial relations among the various entities that compose them - objects, people and actions' (Peterson, Nadel, Bloom, & Garrett, 1996 :555), equally define the events of a secondary science classroom. Science classrooms, as spatial entities within schools, are also defined by language that carries *a priori* principles and assumptions about the world (Hodge & Kress, 1993). For example, it is difficult to separate the word 'school' from some connection to structures (school buildings) and events (being schooled). Here the sign 'school' gives shape to the concept and as Short (1986) suggests, '(I)n ordinary parlance, the word calls the thought to mind' (p. 112). But the words 'school' and 'school buildings' are structured around elaborate systems of both verbal and non-verbal practices that form intricate layers of meanings. These meanings have come to form the foundation of the practices, which govern the 'what', and 'how' of secondary schools today.

To understand the process of implementing changes at BCC, including changing the buildings to reflect the middle school structure, and 'community college' requires an understanding of how school buildings resonate with meanings and how these meanings are closely linked to established systems of knowing and being. These systems are historically constructed around power and knowledge: about what it is to be a teacher in a particular location, and what it is to be a student in that same location.

Changing the organisational and pedagogical arrangements at BCC required that traditional meanings of secondary schooling be transformed. Including year seven students catalysed alternative approaches to learning and teaching. Previously, Western Australian students began secondary school in year eight, the year they turn thirteen. Secondary schools are quite different to primary schools. They have a timetable that requires students and teachers to change rooms at different intervals throughout the day;

they provide lockers for students in which to store their equipment; have specialised spaces for certain 'subjects'; a siren to signal intervals throughout the day and assessments and high stakes examinations. As we will see, these constructions of secondary schools are typically 'built into' the bricks and mortar.

8.3 Hegemonic Traditions for Building Secondary Schools in WA

In order to understand the process of changing the architectural spaces to allow for new possibilities at BCC, I will refer to the formal structures and processes that have historically exercised control on the design and construction of secondary schools in WA. In drawing on Gramsci's notion of hegemony, which provides an account of how a dominant ideology structures social groups and collective identities, I will illustrate how sociocultural hegemonies such as the faculty arrangement in secondary schools was formed and reformed through discourse (Kenway, 1995). As Fraser suggests:

The notion of hegemony points to the intersection of power, inequality and discourse. However, it does not entail that the ensemble of descriptions that circulate in society comprise a monolithic or seamless web, nor that dominant groups exercise on (*sic*) absolute top-down control of meaning. On the contrary, 'hegemony' designates a process wherein cultural authority is negotiated and contested. It presupposes that societies contain a plurality of discourses and discursive sites, a plurality of positions and perspectives from which to speak. Of course not all of these have equal authority. Yet conflict and contestation are part of the story.

(Fraser, 1992, cited in Kenway, *ibid.*)

Through the analysis of the negotiation and contestation relating to the buildings for BCC I was interested in tracing the influence of established policy documents relating to the building of new secondary schools in order establish how they coalesced with new discourses relating to change and innovation. What I am emphasising in this chapter is that social and historical factors impacted on the formulation of the building policy, and that the ideological underpinnings relating to curriculum and pedagogy are clearly

evident in the building project briefs, architectural drawings and built forms. As Kress suggests:

The multiplicity of textual forms, of genres, thus acts as a semiotic, social and cultural mesh which reveals the meanings of that society to its members and allows them to act conventionally or against convention.

(Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996 :189)

The building of secondary schools in WA had a long tradition established by the Public Works Department (PWD)¹⁸. While there is evidence of a range of 'innovative' architectural responses to the building of secondary schools in the 1970s (van Bronswijk & Richards, 1994), in general, they were built to formula. This formula was based on the logic that secondary schools were organised around subject faculties, and all subjects were taught in specific rooms. From the 1970s, there was a strengthening of the 'faculty model' with new secondary schools reflecting this:

(Since the 1970s) planning of high schools was also reformed, following an experiment with the City Beach High School, where separate pavilions for specific study areas had replaced the conventional rows of classrooms.

(van Bronswijk & Richards, 1994 :19)

The separation of 'specific study areas' (faculties) became a strong organisational focus for the building and operation of secondary schools in WA and at the time of opening BCC, the faculty model of secondary schooling was a hegemonic one. It regulated each of the domains of secondary schooling - buildings, curriculum, pedagogy and organisation and shaped the implicit orientations of those involved with designing, building and working in and for schools, and was reflected in a range of policy texts.

The policy texts generated over the course of time, unchanged from the early 1970s, took the form of regulatory frameworks and guidelines, which defined the process of establishing a school in minuscule detail. The process in turn spawned a range of authoritative 'experts' (the school furniture branch, the school equipment branch, the

¹⁸ The PWD was restructured and renamed the Building Management Authority (BMA) in June, 1985.

school gardening branch, primary staffing, and secondary staffing branch) which formed complex nets of hierarchies, procedures and relations with respect to school buildings.

The resultant 'authorities', located at the Central Office, were organised in such a way that the inter-relationships between the parts were in fact fragmentary - each operated with a specific brief and each functioned to serve a specific purpose. Yet despite their isolated operations, each collaborated to maintain those institutionalised practices that regulated the design, staffing and equipping of secondary schools. The point is illustrated in the comment made by the senior architect for the BCC project:

They used to build a high school every year. In fact sometimes they used to build two or three a year and there was a whole infrastructure that developed around the buildings, and the construction, and the equipment, and the supplies, and everything arrived. There was a whole team of people who delivered; all fragmented team players and um it, because every school got pumped out the same, everybody knew their role and just delivered the same thing. (APL 1)

Secondary school buildings were designed and built to accommodate specific subject spaces which conformed to certain rules, depending on the types of activities involved, and in turn, they were constitutive of the 'ways of operating' (de Certeau, 1984/1988: xiv). These ways of operating gave rise to a complex arrangement of systems, rules and rituals that were bound to the structure of the curriculum and the pedagogical practices of the subject. For example, spatial allocations, furniture, equipment and staffing were all underscored by the faculty arrangement. Thus, in the case of a secondary science laboratory, the spaces were of a standard size, had long raised benches which were secured to the floor. Each bench was fitted with a number of Bunsen burners and sinks that were placed at intervals sufficient to allow space for two or three students to work together. Students sat on high backless stools; the floor was covered with linoleum rather than carpet and there was usually a fume cupboard in which to handle toxic chemicals. There was also typically a demonstration platform at the front of the classroom for the teacher. Staffing was calculated to include a 'science technician',

who was responsible for preparation and supervision of equipment and chemicals which were of a 'standard issue'.

In turn, these systems, rules and rituals (McLaren, 1998) were woven into the fabric of the school structures. The spaces were made of often concealed practices, which were linked in intricate ways associated with subject dispositions, and then cemented in the form of bricks and mortar, bringing into form, an established 'common sense' view of secondary school buildings and how they were to be used. The 'faculty' secondary school, as a cultural product, was built on the basis of an historical arrangement founded on paradigmatic assumptions about domains of knowledge and teaching and learning. This arrangement reinforced separation of staff into particular areas of the school, as is evident in the comment below from one of the research subjects, a principal of a WA high school:

In this school the faculty arrangement means that certain subjects can only be taught in certain areas. The whole building design is against anything else, other than one discipline being taught in the designated faculty space. It gives teachers no option for any experimentation. It gives them no opportunity to interact with other people, in other faculties, or to even look at other people teaching. You don't happen to even walk past the door of somebody who's teaching in a different subject area. The isolation is strengthened by the fact that you don't even have to leave your area because there's a staff room within the faculty. Everything is designed to keep you in there.

(EDWA SP 1)

The grouping of teachers in faculties not only reinforced the separation of teachers, but also greatly influenced the way students would 'use' the spaces. Young people entering a secondary school that was built around the faculty model were initiated into the 'movement cycle' which required them to move from room to room for different subjects. Thus, for students, to 'do science' in secondary school, is to be in a science laboratory for a given period of time, or to 'do' technology and enterprise is to be in a cooking or sewing or computing room. The 'doing' of science in secondary school is linked to epistemological understandings relating to the subject, which is more than often

recognised as 'practical' (Horne, 1999 :9). In line with the classification of a 'practical' subject, specialised spaces (science laboratories) are constructed to accommodate the established pedagogical patterns. To allow every student who 'does' science, access to the specialised space, a timetable is constructed, and this not only serves to control the use of the space, but also reinforces the belief that 'doing science' is 'going to the science laboratory'. Epistemological and cultural traditions define the recommended length of time that students should typically spend 'doing subjects' in any one week and are used as the benchmark for calculating space requirements. In WA, suggested times for individual learning areas is specified in the Curriculum Framework:

Figure 8-1: Recommended Times for Curriculum in WA

Recommended times in minutes/week for Years 7-10 (Early adolescence)	
The Arts Outcomes	240
English Outcomes	360
Health and Physical Education Outcomes	240
Languages Other Than English Outcomes	240
Mathematics Outcomes	360
Science Outcomes	300
Society and Environment Outcomes	300
Technology and Enterprise (TAE) Outcomes	240

(EDWA, 1997 :9)

These suggested times carry a number of critical messages about the structure and organisation of the lower secondary year levels, which are relevant to the discussion. In the first instance, the time-value for individual subjects varies significantly. English has a suggested time of 360 minutes per week, whereas Technology and Enterprise (TAE) 240 minutes. English, the *Generic Brief* (EDWA, 1994d, section 10-1) suggests, is usually taught in (General Learning Areas) GLAs, whereas TAE requires that students work in specialist areas (EDWA, 1994d, section 14-1). The coupling of the suggested times, with the expectation that different subjects occur in specified locations, has

immediate implications for the semiotic event of schooling. That is, there is an historical arrangement which underscores the planning of the school, and this historical arrangement serves not just as a control in the planning of the buildings, but also functions as a pre-determiner for how students and teachers will later use the spaces.

Once the school is operative, a moving dynamic space, it becomes essential that a timetable be constructed in order to rotate students through the Specialist Areas. Thus, for a school with 490 students (the original estimate for BCC), based on the recommended time of 300 minutes for science per week, and thirty two students in each group, the allocation of 4.5 specialised science Effective Teaching Areas (EFTAs) is made. 'Practical subjects' (Horne, 1999), including computing, materials technology (previously manual arts), food technology (previously home science) textile technology (previously sewing), Art and Craft, Physical Education and the library are designed with specific pedagogical practices in mind (EDWA, 1994d). As we will see below, they are designed on the basis that students spend a standard period of time, in a given location, in a particular group size. The total number of EFTAs is then calculated for the whole school. The *Generic Brief* is designed with the expectation that students move from GLAs, (i.e. standard classrooms) to Specialist Areas in the course of the day:

The students will be **required** to move regularly to the Library and Specialist Areas in the school. The GLAs should be located, with respect to the rest of the school, so that a minimum of time is lost to movement between learning sessions.

(EDWA, 1994, Section 3, my emphasis)

If we read the specification of time for students in the years 7-10, (I will use the example of science) of 300 minutes per week, with the expectation that students will be **required** to move to Specialist Areas, it becomes immediately evident that the *Generic Brief* is structured on the premise that science occurs in specialist science areas and students move there for specified periods of time each week. The *Generic Brief* exerts a powerful force in the disciplining of teachers and students. It has techniques of surveillance, normalisation and distribution (Gore, 1998) written into it. It is a controlling mechanism even before students and teachers enter the spaces, underscored

by a range of discourses that mesh together to frame the social relationships and pedagogical practices. As Foucault notes:

Take, for example, an educational institution: the disposal of its space, the meticulous regulations which govern its internal life, the different activities which are organised there, the diverse persons who live there or meet one another there, each with his own function, his well-defined character- all these things constitute a block of capacity - communication - power. The activity which ensures apprenticeship and the acquisition of aptitudes or types of behaviour is developed there by means of a whole ensemble of regulated communications (lessons, questions and answers, orders, exhortations, coded signs of obedience, differentiation marks of the "value" of each person and of the levels of knowledge) and by means of a whole series of power processes (enclosures, surveillance, reward and punishment, the pyramidal hierarchy).

(Foucault, 1983: 218-219, cited in Gore, 1998)

Up until the time of the design of BCC, the 'meticulous regulations' (ibid.) governing the use of the spaces in Western Australian secondary schools was further strengthened by policies about staffing formulae, teachers' industrial awards, curriculum policies which stipulate recommended times for individual learning areas, policies about class sizes and room sizes and student safety. These policies underscore the *Generic Brief*, which in turn served as a mechanism of power on the architect in the first instance, and ultimately on the practices and relationships between teachers and students. To understand the difficulties associated with changing the buildings and operations at BCC, and to imagine and realise new possibilities it is necessary to recognise the power-knowledge relations that were critically linked to established discourses and practices.

The process of change and innovation at BCC was not simply the replacement of one arrangement, with an alternative. Rather, the unique context of BCC, with the inclusion of year seven students in the State's first middle school, the involvement of the community, the employment of primary and secondary teachers were all significant variables in realising new meanings of secondary schooling. The designers of the school

drew on the discourses of change and innovation, including those associated with curriculum changes, middle schooling and community, in order to create new meanings. But these new discourses rubbed uncomfortably with existing policy texts, as I show in the following example. The example below serves to illustrate how changes in the curriculum policy influenced and impacted on the design of the BCC buildings.

8.3.1 Exemplar - Technology and Enterprise (TAE)

The Technology and Enterprise curriculum area is one of eight¹⁹ that make up the key components of the Western Australian curriculum. The Learning Area includes the subjects of agriculture, business studies, computing, home economics and manual arts. The introduction of the TAE Learning Area in 1993, signalled a shift away from the traditional domestic notions of these subjects towards a more market based ideology:

Technology is a generic term, and as a learning area involves the purposeful application of knowledge, experience and resources to create products and processes that meet human needs. Enterprise, refers to the students' ability to identify needs and opportunities in a variety of situations and to take action which meets those needs or opportunities.
(EDWA, 1994d - Section 14, Technology and Enterprise - original emphasis)

The *Generic Brief* stresses the *purposeful application of knowledge, experiences and resources*. 'Purposeful' implies intention, agency, and activity. So the *Generic Brief* defines a pedagogical intent. It makes a statement about **how** students will engage with the subject of TAE. The above description is supplemented by information about how the spaces within the TAE buildings will be used:

The introduction of the TAE Learning Area has implications for the current standards of facilities provision and teaching methodology used within each contributing subject. While these subject areas will still retain some specialised functions and equipment,

¹⁹ The eight curriculum Learning Areas defined within EDWA's Curriculum Framework include English, Mathematics, Science, Technology and Enterprise, Studies of Society and Environment, Languages Other than English (LOTE), the Arts and Physical and Health Education.

there will be a greater integration between them, particularly through sharing technology and common learning processes. Students should be able to move freely between areas through a Central Shared Resource Area and within this central space, to be easily supervised and visible to teachers.

(EDWA, 1994 d, Section 14)

There are a number of salient points related to the above description. In the first instance, the explanation of TAE contained within the *Generic Brief* indicates specific pedagogical practices - integration, sharing and the use of technology. That is, it functions as a power in the construction of knowledge. The second point of importance is that the explanation focuses specifically on student movement and student supervision - '(S)tudents should be able to move freely between areas ... and be easily supervised and visible to teachers'. The *Generic Brief* simultaneously serves to structure the power relations within the spaces. 'Moving freely' within a 'Central Shared Resource Area' and being 'easily supervised and visible to teachers', resonate with parallels to Foucault's panopticon (Usher and Edwards, 1994). While Foucault was primarily concerned with exercise of power-knowledge in prisons, there are many parallels between the nineteenth-century Benthamite design of a prison and the design for the TAE learning area at BCC. Within the Benthamite design, individual cells encircle a central observation point. Individuals are separated and isolated and then subjected to surveillance. They are unaware of who is observing them, or indeed, if they are being observed. For those within the cells (or classrooms?) the possibility of observation serves as a self-disciplinary technique. 'Moving freely' through the spaces, involves disciplining one's behaviour. Teachers and students become agents of, and subject to, surveillance. They can all be seen - integration and sharing means being observed. The new technology area incorporates new design features which orientates students and teachers to new forms of pedagogy linked to new subject dispositions. The opening up of the technology spaces means that the central area serves as a design hub and specialist facilities are positioned around the central area.

Part of what is at issue here is the move towards more student-centred pedagogies and collaborative teaching models in the new TAE curriculum area, which was written in

1993. These changes link to the redefinition of the discursive field of TAE from a largely domestic discourse towards a market discourse. 'Purposeful application of knowledge, experience and resources to create products and processes that meet human needs' linked to the notion of 'enterprise', position TAE into a new trajectory linked to products, markets and profits. Students are to be inducted into new forms of work and management which focus specifically on collaboration, sharing and flexibility, and this is clearly evident throughout the *Generic Brief*:

Students need to be capable with all new technology. High tech. (*sic*) Manufacturing is the pathway and students need to have the right 'mindset' rather than specific trades.

(EDWA, 1994d, Section 14)

Teaching methodology (in Materials Technology) is moving from a focus of developing individual hand skills to that of problem identification and problem solving.

(EDWA, 1994d, Section, 15)

As a consumer science (Textiles and Food Technology) is moving away from the traditional area of home cooking and sewing and embracing areas of:

- Design - food/textiles
- Materials - food/textiles
- Health - personal/society
- Production - service industry.

(EDWA, 1994d, Section17)

The links to the market are clearly evident in these examples. The 'aptitudes', of which Foucault spoke (op. cit.) extend to defining the type of 'mindset' that students should have. The *Generic Brief* structures the teaching and learning **before** students and teachers enter the spaces. The descriptions of **how** the spaces are to be used further reinforce the shift towards a market ideology.

All that said the question of change and innovation at BCC takes on a different appearance. Was there really scope for change and innovation within the highly specified brief, or was change and innovation being steered towards the broader social and political agendas of linking micro-economic reform to secondary schooling? Was it possible for

teachers and leaders to imagine new possibilities of schooling within such tight framings, or was the direction of change and innovation at BCC predetermined within the *Generic Brief* which had specific policy links to the changing nature of the curriculum towards a market orientation? Certainly, the emphasis on building flexibility into the design of BCC is clearly evident. However 'flexibility' in the context of TAE relates to developing in students a particular disposition: one that links with the broader market 'orientation' of the learning area.

Textiles and Food

In using the example of *Textiles and Food* I seek to further demonstrate the controlling forces brought to bear on the practical realisation of change and innovation at BCC. My assertion is that the process of implementing change and innovation at BCC were significantly influenced by the existing policies and practices, linked not only to the *Generic Brief* but also to established pedagogical traditions. The example serves to illustrate further, how the highly detailed specification of spaces exercised controls on the imagined uses of spaces at BCC, despite the motivation for change. Whilst there was a strong emphasis on the changing nature of the learning area within the context of the introduction of an 'outcomes approach', and these changes were reflected in the BCC buildings, the changing discourse had not been realised in pedagogical practices.

For TAE, the total space allocation is (1477m²), which is almost double the allocated space for science (706m²) and one third more than Visual and Performing Arts (1060m²). Clearly, the investment of such space to TAE carries with it, major implications for the use of the space in this Learning Area. Implicit in the allocation is the ideological underpinning that this subject is conducted in particular ways. In so far as the allocation of space implies value, the design brief of the school immediately serves to reinforce the social and material practices of existing secondary schools in at least two ways. Firstly, the spatial allocations serve to structure the events that are likely to take place. That is, they carrying signifying messages which classify the reality of TAE within the context of the spatial configurations. Secondly, the definition of 'specialised spaces' requires that students have access to these spaces and this requires the construction of a tightly managed timetable.

The specification of spaces for Textiles and Food are listed in the *Generic Brief* and has a total spatial allocation of 339m², with the breakdown as follows:

Figure 8-2 : Spatial Allocations for Textiles and Food

	Floor Area m²
Food technology	95
Human development laboratory	95
Preparation area	18
Pantry	10
Food Store	8
Textiles	95
Textiles Store	16
Fitting Room	2
Total Floor Area	339 m²

(EDWA, 1994d, Section 3-5)

Here immediately we see the specification of spaces in terms of their ideational and interpersonal functions (Halliday & Hasan, 1985). The allocation of 95m² to Food Technology presumes a particular activity within this space. In most traditional high schools the arrangements include stoves, all of the same type, in a particular configuration with a clear indication of how this arrangement should be managed. In addition, 'regulations' specify how many students would be in a home economics room at any one time (these are specified by industrial agreements) and what the activities of those students would be (specified in curricular documents). The allocation of 18m² to the food preparation area again signals the enactment of the pedagogical process, whereby typically, someone else (a 'home economics assistant') would prepare the food for the students to use in their cooking activities. At an interpersonal level, there is degree of control of the space because students would typically be excluded from the food preparation area.

Vignette 8-1

In seeking to change the structure and delivery of the TAE Learning Area, I attempted to negotiate variations to the spatial arrangements for some of the subjects. In the case of 'food technology', my vision was to engage students in activities which provided them with meaningful experiences which linked to the modules they were studying in the classroom.

I thus envisaged that students would be able to select the types of cooking they would do, to plan the activities and to order and prepare food independently.

This vision was constructed through my own mediation of the design brief, and the curriculum framework, which both suggest involving students in 'the purposeful application of knowledge, experience and resources'. For me, this meant that the pedagogical processes would look entirely different to the traditional model of cooking, where the teacher's assistant prepared food and set up equipment and students engaged in a 'do what's in my head with your hands' model of cooking.

In enacting this change, I sought to change one single signifier in the food technology area - the installation of a range of stoves instead of a standard uniform issue.

My interpretation of the intent of the curriculum documents provided me with the impetus to insist on this change, minor though it seemed, in order to change the dynamics of the pedagogical relationships in 'food technology'. I envisaged a range of equipment where students would truly have 'purposeful' experiences and where many of the decisions were

made not by the teacher or the teacher's assistant, but by the students themselves.

To enact this change involved some basic changes. I requested the installation of different models of stoves in one learning area. I imagined that for experiences to be 'purposeful' and to be relevant to a 'variety of situations' students should have experience with a range of stoves - gas, electric and microwave. For me, this change was crucial. It signalled a range of symbolic changes about the types of activities that would be offered for students, the relationships between staff and students and the responsibilities of non-teaching staff (home economics assistants). It also meant that teachers and students would necessarily have to be engaged in decisions that changed the nature of the traditional cooking lesson.

The fallout from this decision was enormous. The architectural plans were already structured around the notion that all stoves would be the same. That is, they would occupy the same space, require the same fittings (either gas or electricity) and could be purchased with an advantage of economy of scale. To purchase stoves of different sizes and types required a major paradigm shift in the following ways:

What would the teachers do - how they would engage in the pedagogical process which was built around the assumption that all students would have access to exactly the same equipment and would follow the teacher in step by step processes in the completion of the cooking project. These structures were linked to the training of the teacher, the industrial agreements around her work and the deployment of the support staff and the delivery and assessment of the curriculum.

Architecturally – how could different stoves be installed within the predetermined design of the rooms, which were rigidly mapped and fitted against existing spatial arrangements, costs and timelines? Changing the stoves meant changing the plans and all the associated architectural and building procedures associated with this.

Industrially - What could legally be required of teachers if the stoves were not all consistent? What of safety issues, curriculum materials and time? What would the 'home economics assistant' now do, if not preparing food and equipment? How would the teacher prepare, teach and assess if all the equipment varied and if students were spending part of their time preparing their own food? How would ordering of supplies, cooking times and instructions on how to use stoves be managed?

(Larsen Personal journal, 07 November, 1994)

Stoves as Signifiers

In themselves, the positioning and types of stoves in cooking areas within a secondary school signify many things. The spatial arrangements in traditional schools results in a number of stoves (usually six) being placed in an ordered arrangement, with a 'demonstration bench and stove' at the front of the room. The stoves were the same model, occupied the same space, had the same operating instructions and were either gas or electric.

In seeking to vary the stove models, I wanted to signal a range of changes. But the semiotics of stoves only became active when put within the broader context for my impulse for change. That is, my intention to change the stoves served as the physical manifestation, a sign: of the fact that as leader of the school, I wanted things to be different. I was effectively saying, 'there's going to be a new approach here' and to teach food technology at BCC is to engage in different pedagogical relationships. Students will

not come into this space and participate in a 'do what's in the teacher's head with their own hands' experience. Both the teachers and the students will be engaged in processes which move beyond the highly structured, prescriptive and authoritative activities which had been characteristic of previous practices. The presence of different stoves in themselves did not necessarily predetermine this change though. They merely served as a sign, a trace that carried meaning into the domains of curriculum and pedagogy. Nonetheless, as the comment by the BCC architectural project manager indicates, changing this one element, resulted in a range of difficulties:

(There were) two problems in that one. One was um in fact at three levels I guess you'd call it.

First of all, the curriculum people were challenged by it, and winning their hearts and minds to take the risk was one challenge and that's one fence I guess you'd call it.

Then convincing our people who standardly specify stoves - no we don't really want these this time or yes you do because that's what we always have, was a challenge in its own right. You wouldn't have thought it would be a problem but I guess we weren't overly client-focused in those days. We were working hard on it, even that was a challenge.

That was your regular supply people, and then of course what we were doing was, at that point, we pretty much already documented the buildings and a lot of documentation teams, do things and put them away and say 'that's done'. And what we were doing is coming back and changing things and that's usually the bane of the documenter's life is have to go back and change things. And we had to re-work components in the normal delivery process as well. Just because of the time involved. So that re-work component was another barrier.

I suppose that people didn't openly embrace the concept of changing things because it just meant more work. (APL 1)

In interpreting the intent of the changes to the new TAE curriculum, in order to reorient the teaching of food technology from the established domestic focus towards the intended market emphasis, what appeared to be a relatively simple change was immediately problematic. The apparent 'flexibility' for the principal to influence changes to the BCC buildings had not been extended to include changes to already specified elements (stoves). The existing arrangements, connected to long pedagogical histories influenced by EDWA Curriculum Consultants, who participated in the design process for BCC, and the subsequent architectural practices were being challenged by the principal.

The example above also illustrates that while the buildings branch had intertextually drawn on the new curriculum texts and had in fact written these changes into the design brief, many of the artefacts that signified traditional curricular and pedagogical arrangements (such as stoves and equipment lists) were unchanged. As a result there was a philosophical mismatch between the articulated ideal (an innovative, flexible school for the twenty first century) and the pragmatics of changing peoples' attitudes and behaviours. The added paradox is that the TAE learning area was espousing the ideal of flexibility and individual decision making, when in real terms, the specification of the equipment for the school had not been changed to reflect this emphasis.

Despite the problems, the specification of the stoves was changed. The boundaries of 'flexibility' were tested and contested. The process of specifying equipment and facilities for BCC led to changes in the policy, allowing for greater localised input into the design and equipping of the school.

Nexus between Space and Pedagogy

The nexus between space and pedagogy is one which is crucial to the argument because my assertion is that the prescription of these spaces, mediates the events which are envisioned prior to their enactment. What is important is that the spaces serve to encode the pedagogical practices and that any attempt to 'rewrite' these, must necessarily take into account the socialising systems that are already established. That is, the linguistic categorisation of space by way of names and labels, coupled with the spatial arrangements are underpinned by ideological systems that structure the learning

experience in particular ways. Simply designing 'new', 'innovative' and 'flexible' spaces is not sufficient. As Foucault suggests:

I think it is somewhat arbitrary to try to dissociate the effective practice of freedom of people, the practice of social relations, and the spatial distributions in which they find themselves. If they are separated, they become impossible to understand. Each can only be understood through the other.

(Foucault, in Rabinow, 1984: 246)

There is strong evidence that the new curriculum had a significant impact on the imagined social relations and spatial distribution at BCC. The articulated ideology in the new TAE Learning Area is that of the 'free market and enterprise' which moves the focus away from the previously domestic emphasis to one that uses the subjects as an induction to technology for profit. The new curriculum policy sought to redefine the social relations between teachers and students. That is, the curriculum documents serve as a hegemonic device in the (re)structuring of *The Generic High School Design Brief*. The changing discourse from domestic focus to 'the market' is evident in the TAE brief, as indicated below:

Figure 8-3: New Terminology in Technology Curriculum

New terminologies are beginning to replace traditional names and to describe changes to learning methodologies.	
<u>New Terminology</u>	<u>Existing Terminology</u>
Materials Technology	Manual Arts
Information & Business Technology	Computing/Business Studies
Textiles and Food Technology	Home Economics

(*Generic Brief* - Section 14, Technology and Enterprise, see Appendix p. 427)

The use of the term 'Human Development Laboratory' (Fig. 8-2) for teaching areas which were previously identified as *Family and Childcare Studies* similarly carry

ideological positions which predefine the way in which the curriculum will be enacted within the allocated spaces. The noun 'laboratory' alerts the architects and builders to the fact that the buildings are now to be thoroughly modern in keeping with the changing disposition of this subject. Furthermore, it signals a move from a largely working-class domestic (and female) ideology of homemaking and childcare to one which is more 'scientific and technical', and presumably, inclusive. In the same way, the introduction of terms such as materials/food/textiles 'technology' to replace the traditional subjects of Manual Arts, Computing/Business Studies and Home Economics (Fig. 8-3) are intended to signal the new dispositions of these subjects.

With respect to the General Learning Areas (used for subjects that are not traditionally viewed as 'practical') planners and architects of BCC were keen to provide greater flexibility in order to facilitate the structure of middle school around integrated teams. A central consideration was a 'more flexible allocation' (APL 1) of space for individual teams in order to facilitate the organisation of year seven and eight students in 'home rooms'. I turn to a discussion of this issue in the following section.

8.3.2 Space as Currency

The determination of space for individual subjects carries important messages about the semiotic event of schooling. As I said above, the classification of individual spaces is defined within existing paradigms relating to how the subject is conducted, how many students participate in the subject (governed by industrial awards) and how much time is recommended for each subject. The definition of spaces in the *Generic Brief* indicates the variations. I have selected a range of examples in the figure below to illustrate the way in which space is allocated to different subjects within the *Generic Brief*.

Figure 8-4: Spatial Allocations for Secondary Subjects

	No. of Spaces	Area m ²	Total Area m ²
GLAs for non-specialist subjects, such as English, Mathematics, Languages and Society & Environment	20	64	1280
Science			
Laboratories (Dedicated)	3	92	276
Science - Laboratories (Multipurpose)	2	92	184

Common Resource Area	1	92	92
Seminar	1	40	40
Materials Technology			
Materials Studio	1	280	280
Textiles and Food Technology			
Food Technology	1	95	95
Human Development Laboratory	1	95	95
Information Technology			
Computer Laboratory	1	75	75
Business Laboratory	1	75	75
Flexible Laboratory	1	75	75
Seminar	1	40	40
Visual Arts			
Painting and Drawing Studio	1	120	120
Print Making Studio	1	100	100
Ceramics - Sculpture Studio	1	100	100
Physical Education			
Hall/Gym	1	508	508

(EDWA, 1994d, Section 3)

GLAs (used for English, Mathematics, Studies of Society, Languages) are allocated 64m² (EDWA, 1994d, Section 3-4). In WA, the standard class size for lower secondary in these subjects is currently thirty-two students. The spatial allocation of 2m² per student in these subjects is less than half the amount of space allocated to food technology which is 95m² (ibid.). Based on the industrial requirement of no more than twenty-two students in food technology, we can see that food technology has an allocated space of slightly more than 4m² per student.

The allocation of 2m² per student for the 'non-practical' subjects (English, Mathematics, Society and Environment and Languages) suggests a good deal about the implied pedagogic practices. Whilst there is evidence in the *Generic Brief* that some 'activity' such as group work and 'more flexible learning' is suggested in 'non practical subjects', in general, the description of the subjects, coupled with the allocation of space, suggest a strong orientation towards a teacher centred pedagogy:

English is the first subject area to pioneer small group work (4-6 students) and needs flexible furniture' (EDWA, 1994d, Section 10) and

Studies of Society and the Environment has traditionally taken place in normal LA's (sic) in a teacher stand and deliver format but is seeking more flexible environment for its learning to take place.
(EDWA, 1994d, Section 12)

Despite the commitment to 'new and innovative structures for the twenty first century' (EDWA PO 2) the design of the buildings was clearly inscribed with the 'old ways': of subjects in faculties, of traditional spatial arrangements and of calculations based on existing policies relating to class sizes and costs. For the architects of BCC, 'innovation' required that the design of the school be shaped within the spatial allocations traditionally given to individual subjects. It was the **renaming** and **reconfiguring** of the spaces, in line with the curriculum changes and the classification of 'middle schooling' that constituted the notion of change and innovation at the school.

The strongest reason for the 'backward referencing' to established traditions is the uncertainty associated with the project. For EDWA, the establishment of BCC as the State's first middle school was a 'pilot project' as is evident from the briefing below:

A Year 7 curriculum, and the quality of care associated with primary education, would be maintained on the Community Campus with the added element of integrated studies and access to secondary facilities. The opportunity to establish a Year 7, 8 and 9 middle school, in the context of a pilot project, would link WA to current research and development.
(EDWA, 1993a :1)

However, the school buildings could not be so different that in the event that the school was considered a 'failure', for whatever reasons, the school could not subsequently revert back to a traditional high school:

The facilities have been designed so that, if everything fails and parents and/or the Ministry reject the idea of

a middle school, or a Year 7 attendance at the new facility, it can revert quite easily to a standard senior high school format.

(EDWA, 1993a :2)

With this caveat, existing arrangements and spatial configurations of a standard secondary school necessarily influenced the building policy for BCC. Changing secondary school arrangements to incorporate the notion of 'middle schooling' at BCC could only be undertaken with the safety net of the 'standard senior high school' as a backstop. The suggestion that there was a possibility that 'everything fails' indicates that at best, EDWA's commitment to the project was tentative. Clearly the inclusion of year seven students at BCC under the banner of 'middle schooling' was an 'untested' change.

Costing for BCC buildings was also based on established traditions linked to the standard allocation of classrooms (Effective Teaching Areas (EFTAs)). Change and innovation was therefore contingent on the extent to which the new curriculum could be implemented and school based organisational and pedagogical initiatives could be 'wrapped around' traditional building arrangements in order to create a new secondary school entity of 'middle school'. However, the emphasis on students being accommodated in 'home rooms' required a reassessment of the spatial allocations in order to increase the number of GLAs.

In traditional secondary schools, calculations and costings of accommodation needs were based on a ninety- percent occupancy rate of rooms at any one time. There was no scope for students to be identified with a 'home room', and typically students and teachers changed rooms at intervals throughout the day. At BCC, the structuring of teams of students in home rooms, required that additional GLAs be built to allow for the allocation of home rooms, and it was in this respect that the notion of 'middle schooling' challenged established practices. As the BCC Architectural Project Leader suggested:

BCC was a real turning point. EFTA counts became less important. We did use the standard allocations as a guide, but we were looking for the home-room concept to be built into the school. At Ballajura we started to break down the barriers regarding the very strict allocations of space per students which had

really totally dominated the building of secondary schools. BCC was really the beginning of thinking about the teaching methodology first, and then planning the school to fit the thinking. We started to think about a range of planning options for greater flexibility - variable sized rooms, more smaller seminar rooms and home rooms. The concept of middle schooling at BCC changed the way we planned and built secondary schools. In the past everything was standardised. We were trying to change the buildings to suit the particular school context. (APL 1)

The planning and building of BCC challenged the established practices relating to costing new schools. It is not surprising that there were a range of difficulties. The historical arrangements that governed the building of secondary schools were defined, documented and costed to the minutiae. Under the banners of 'flexibility' and 'devolution', BCC was a site for testing new pedagogical arrangements that incorporated team structures and notions of 'collaboration'. These changes required a reassessment of the traditional spatial allocations.

At the same time, responsibility for purchasing equipment, which had routinely been undertaken by the Central Office as part of the secondary school buildings, was also devolved to the school level. That the school was on the cusp of the changes meant that there was inevitably confusion as to how the devolved responsibility would work, as indicated below:

One incident that springs to mind is the equipping of the school. Because EDWA hadn't made the transition to a fully devolved system there was total confusion over what equipment should be supplied by the centre and what should be purchased by the school. The Curriculum budgets hadn't been worked out and some staff at central office were still working under the old system. I remember when ten ironing boards turned up at the school. No one knew where they came from. It was a hangover from the old 'supply branch', where every new secondary school got ten ironing boards and out they went, whether you needed them or not. (APL 1)

From a policy perspective, the examples above indicate the uncertainty relating to the proposed changes. Whilst there were nominally 'policies' for new schools and 'middle schooling' within the macro policy of devolution, at the time of planning BCC, the policies themselves were only in spoken texts. The system was clearly in a state of transition and as with any complex organisation, making the transition from one organisational structure to another required that new meanings were materialised through new texts and practices. The examples also highlight the hegemonic struggles that were taking place. The varying degrees of reproduction and transformation, from a highly centralised system to a more devolved system required that the existing orders of discourse be changed as well as the existing social and power relationships.

The policy generation stage was occurring simultaneously with the policy implementation stage. The possibilities and constraints meant that those 'on the ground' (EDWA building project manager, architects, school leadership personnel and teachers), were testing the boundaries and assessing the responses. The architectural design briefs, drawings and ultimately the buildings reflected the changing arrangements. As Kress suggests:

... the participants in a particular occasion of interaction have aims, goals, and responsibilities and they stand in particular social relations to each other. They enact all these in that situation and they use language (among other modes) to do so. The resultant linguistic text encodes, realises and represents these aims and purposes, the relations of the participants and the unfolding enactment of that situation.

(Kress, 1996: 189)

Issues associated with the changing policy for the construction of new schools were also clearly evident in the introduction of the new title 'community high schools', and it is to this that I now turn.

8.4 Building 'Community' into BCC

Unlike all other secondary schools in WA (which were titled 'high schools' or 'senior high schools'), BCC and the new Warnbro Community High School had direct reference to 'Community' in their titles. The schools were not titled 'technology' schools or 'sports schools' or 'high schools' but 'community' schools. In respect to the buildings, the naming of BCC as a 'community school' challenged existing arrangements, which as we have seen above, were previously naturalised within the discursive landscape of secondary schooling. What was the intended purpose for making BCC a 'community college'? In seeking answers to this question, the data relating to the buildings provide intertextual connections to other data discussed in previous chapters. Incorporating 'community' into the design of the school was a motivated choice. It served to strengthen the policy agendas that EDWA was proposing in relation to middle schooling and community participation.

In Chapter six I demonstrated that in planning BCC, EDWA had a clear policy agenda to expand the role of the community within the school. Three central policy initiatives for community participation are evident within the data relating to the buildings. These include the expanded use of the school's facilities by the community; an invigorated role of 'the community' in relation to participation and decision making in the school, and the use of 'community' as an alternative organisational metaphor for the school. That is, the teaching areas and staff study areas (labelled 'Collegiate Areas') would be designed to optimise collaboration and sharing between students and teachers.

In this section I discuss how the notion of 'community' was written into the design briefs and architectural drawings for BCC, and transformed into the school buildings. My purpose is to suggest that EDWA used the BCC buildings to strengthen the policy focus for expanding the notion of 'community' in the three above-mentioned areas.

The analysis draws on the work of O'Toole (1994) who uses a Hallidayan approach for analysing and describing the semiotics of architecture. Whilst Halliday's (1985) systemic functional theory is directed towards a theory of language, O'Toole posits that the categories of 'experiential', 'interpersonal' and 'textual' are equally effective to 'discriminate types of meaning as expressed in the built form' (O'Toole, 1994 :110).

Following O'Toole's example, I adopt a social semiotic approach in order to illustrate how the planners and architects of the school used different semiotic codes, the verbal and the architectural to realise the social semiotic of the 'community' school.

In relationship to the architecture and the built form, the term *Experiential* designates the practical function of the building, that is its purpose as a 'community college'. BCC buildings were designed to relate to users (students, teaching and non-teaching staff and the community) in a range of different ways. Apart from the practical function of housing in excess of one thousand students, the architects and planners of the school clearly had an intention to change the way in which the school would operate. That is, they had an intention to impact on the *Interpersonal* function.

8.4.1 Encouraging a 'Community Milieu' for teachers

The opportunity for teachers to meet and collaborate as part of their everyday teaching has been strongly linked to successful implementation of change and innovation (Hargreaves et al., 1992; Staessens, 1993; Stoll & Fink, 1996) and was clearly a powerful influence on the design of BCC. While there is evidence of 'calling in research' relating to middle schooling and collaborative team structures in secondary schools in a range of data, there is no formal referencing to specific research. Rather 'research' is a generic concept, evident in a range of texts to either substantiate or strengthen a claim for the rationale for introducing middle schooling and collaborative team arrangements at the school.

Recent research into education has identified that the intellectual, social, emotional and physical needs of adolescents today have changed, while schooling structures designed to cater for this group [middle school students] have remained basically the same as when parents were at school.

(Information Bulletin to Ballajura parents, August 1993, see Appendix p. 319)

Interview data with the senior Architectural Project Leader and the EDWA Project Officer indicates a strong emphasis on changing the structural organisation of the school in order to provide opportunities for teacher collaboration **across discipline** areas:

The architectural brief stressed the need for not having staff all in one area and not having staff grouped in disciplines. This originated from the idea that the staff in their private domains and in their conversation domains were not necessarily regulated or pre-determined around their subject matter. At Ballajura there was a strong orientation to changing the architectural drawings to consciously reflect a cross curricular arrangement. Architecturally, I suppose we pushed that agenda a little bit further, even though there were some people in the Department who were opposed to the idea. (APO 1)

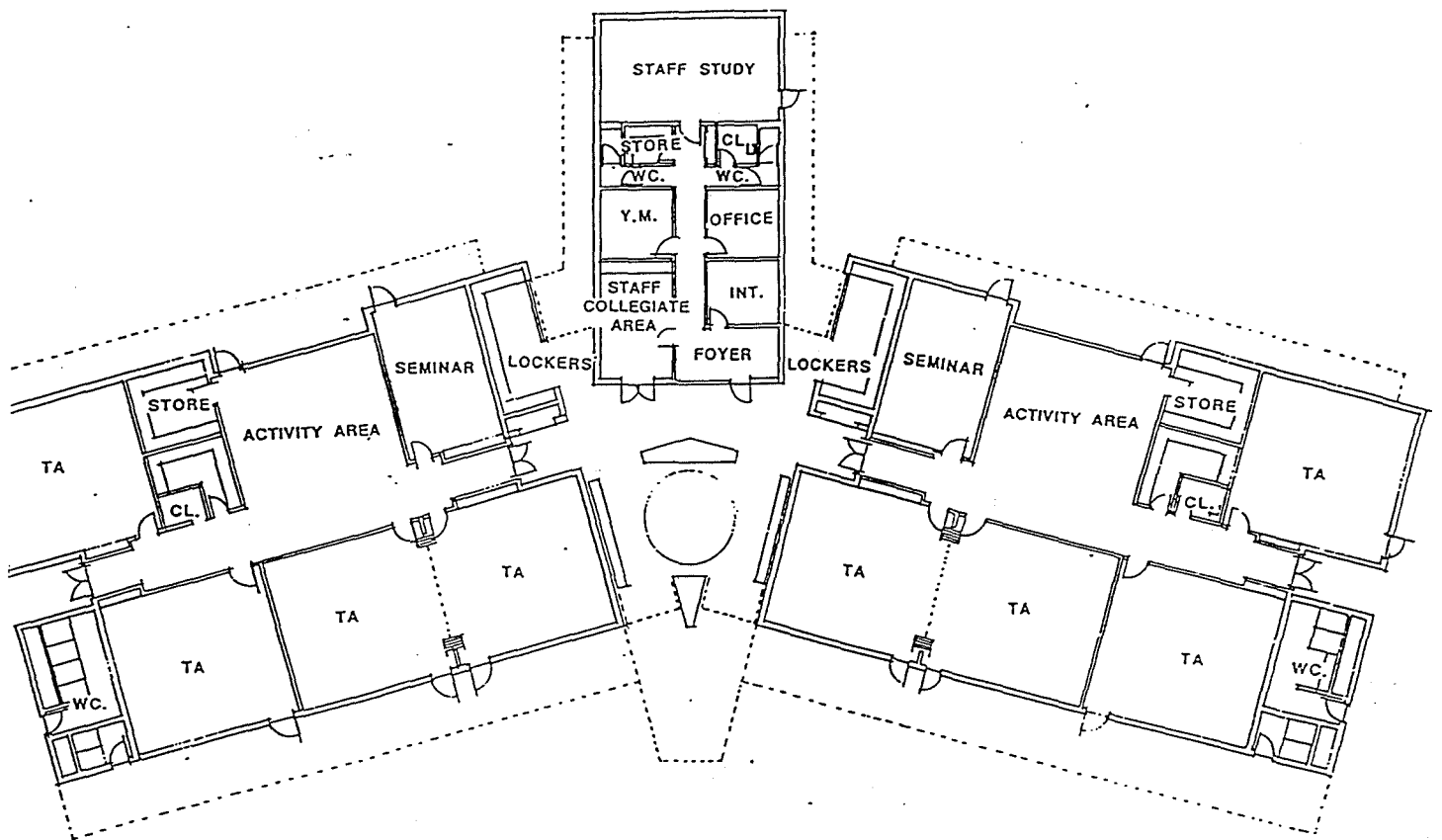
The inclusion of year seven students and the introduction of 'middle schooling' precipitated a policy shift in order to incorporate a 'non-subject faculty base to school structure' (EDWA, 1993c). There was evidence that there was a strong motivation to reduce the number of teachers for students in the lower secondary years and to increase the collegial contact between teachers:

We were concerned that kids in year 8, when they get there (to traditional secondary schools) suddenly got into the arrangement where they could have up to twenty six teachers in one year, if they change teachers for every subject every term. A number of schools were addressing the problem of student alienation and dabbling in student centred learning and cross curricular organisation. So if you've got the question, 'if you were building a school for the twenty first century, what would it be like?' We were taking the ideas from those who were regarded as respected educators. They were suggesting more integrated models in the lower secondary area with an emphasis on teams of teachers.

The collegial areas at Ballajura were designed to remove teacher isolation. My point was that if you've got collaborative learning going on, you need people to sit down and talk, and there's no space in traditional schools to do that, so that was a big difference for BCC. (EDWA PO2)

The emphasis for the collegial work areas, those for use when teachers were to be meeting or working individually with students or small groups were designed to create a 'community atmosphere'. Sub-School Areas included two General Learning Centres with a Collegiate Centre in between:

General Learning Centres with a Collegiate Centre



The arrangement was seen as an important solution to the isolation experienced in many high schools as a result of the 'balkanised' (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991 :52) faculty arrangement. Much of the educational literature (Rosenholtz, 1989; Rudduck, 1991) raises issues associated with teachers' work practices, and stresses the need for teachers to have time and space to reflect on change. Many of the issues discussed linked to the school effectiveness research and resulted in calls by some (Fullan et al. *ibid.*) to change traditional secondary school organisational structures and introduce collaboration, team teaching and shared decision making. The faculty or department model, 'which organizes teachers spatially, temporally, administratively and symbolically ...' (Siskin, 1994 :12) was being challenged, and new social arrangements for teachers were being introduced.

Interview data indicates that EDWA planners and architects drew on this research and the advice from 'respected educators' as the basis for the planning of the buildings to support collaborative team arrangements at BCC:

The research into alienation of young people in schooling and the reform of lower secondary education was a big influence. I did influence people in some way by being very enthusiastic about it, particularly at P & C meetings that I attended. ... We believe the best organisational model is a learning community with teams of teachers, and the best teaching methodology is team teaching and collaborative learning. (EDWA PO2)

Whilst recognising that the architectural drawings and the built form (of BCC) use different modalities to that of the design brief, there is nonetheless a consistency in the social semiotic underlying the school's construction. The discourse of 'community' and 'team arrangements' became the predominant metaphor for the design of the middle school and these terms were used extensively throughout the Project Brief:

(T)o encourage a community atmosphere and team learning, a variety of meeting and playing spaces have been designed along the main circulation routes. These spaces vary in size and shape and provide for a range of formal and informal uses. They are all designed to stimulate spatial awareness and have a sense of fun, and include idiosyncratic spaces such as

collegiate centre "space ships", canteen "tram nodes"
and the transparent covered areas.

(EDWA, undated, BCC Project Description p. 6)

The construction of Sub-School Areas which provided space for teachers from at least two teams to meet together and to share office and staff study spaces was a direct attempt to increase the contact between teachers and students from different teams. The architectural Project Manager suggested that the Sub-School Areas were designed with the intention of:

Building stronger bonds between students and teachers through public and all-user spaces, neutral spaces which are those where students and teachers can meet and converse and then private spaces which become staff domains for study and retreat. We tried to scope the project so that the natural flow of traffic spaces and walkways and natural meeting areas for students were also close to teachers' collegiate areas.

(APO 1)

Physically locating students and teachers together was quite unlike the faculty model school that typically separated faculty meeting areas and teachers' offices well away from students' recreation spaces. The definition of spaces within the Sub School Areas included a large sunken courtyard in amphitheatre formation (termed 'space ship') with additional seating and drink fountains immediately adjacent to the front of the Collegiate Centres. These areas were designated as meeting areas for students and teachers and were termed 'all-user' spaces. The public spaces then led into the Collegiate Centre. The proximity of the students' meeting places to the Collegiate Centre indicates the intention to locate staff and students together. Unlike 'faculty high schools', where teachers were often located away from student areas in insulated 'faculty' offices, the BCC architectural briefs stipulated a change, suggesting a strong input at the interpersonal level.

The first zone of the Collegiate Centre included what the architect termed 'neutral' spaces. These spaces were again intended for use by both students and teachers and thus included a 'meeting area' and 'interview room'. At the far end of the Collegiate Centre was

the teachers' 'private' space - two offices to be used by the Sub School leader and a student support person (e.g. educational psychologist, school chaplain) and staff study area large enough to accommodate two interdisciplinary teams of teachers.

The General Learning Centres each had five General Learning Areas (GLAs), a store and 'flexible' open space²⁰ in the centre. Unlike traditional secondary schools, the GLAs were titled 'home rooms' which meant that they were to function more in line with the traditional primary classroom. Middle school students were to be based in these rooms for a large part of the day and would view the rooms as their 'base'. As the BCC Project Brief suggests:

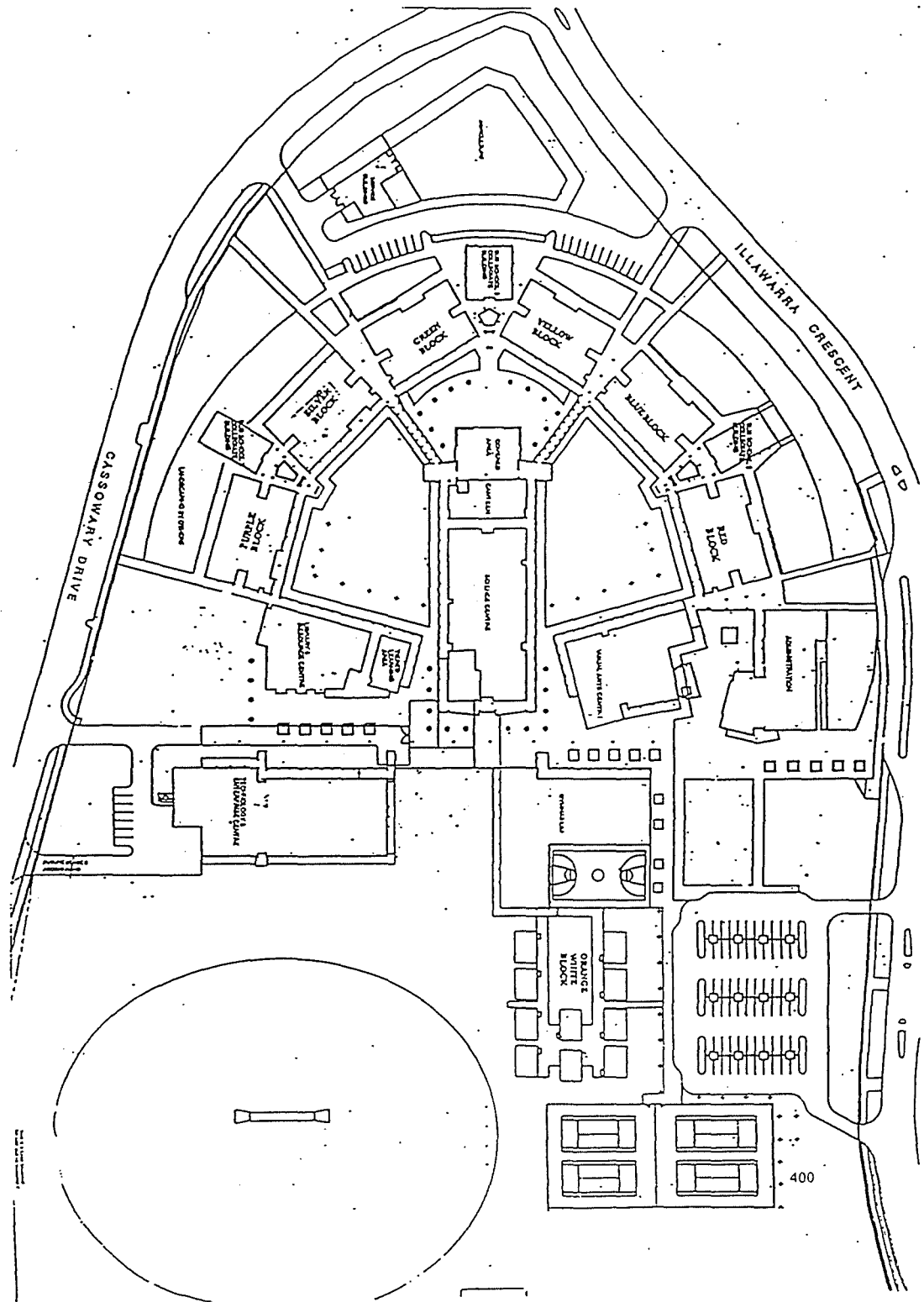
The buildings are designed to differentiate between the students' home base learning areas and the shared, specialist facilities which they visit for specific needs. Specialist facilities are centrally located, bigger scaled and surrounded with brick colonnades, while learning areas are on the perimeter, of a more domestic scale and have open verandahs.

(EDWA, undated, BCC Project Description, p. 6)

In this section I demonstrate how EDWA used the BCC buildings to support the policy changes relating notion of 'community'. The discussion is intended to illustrate how EDWA used the buildings as a strategic part of the policy changes that were aimed at increasing community participation in the school, and also changing the working practices of teachers to support more collaborative models of teaching and learning. In starting with the textual function, the most obvious element is the siting of BCC between a large industrial zone and residential zone, bounded on both sides by two arterial roads. The school, the largest public building in the Ballajura district, was passed by thousands of vehicles on a daily basis. There was no perimeter fencing and the school was an imposing statement, vast in size with single-height red brick buildings with a tall maroon angular roof.

²⁰ The central flexible spaces were used for 'home rooms', due to the burgeoning enrolment. Shortage of accommodation meant that from the day the school was opened, these spaces were needed as 'home rooms'.

School Plan, Showing Orientation to Main Roads



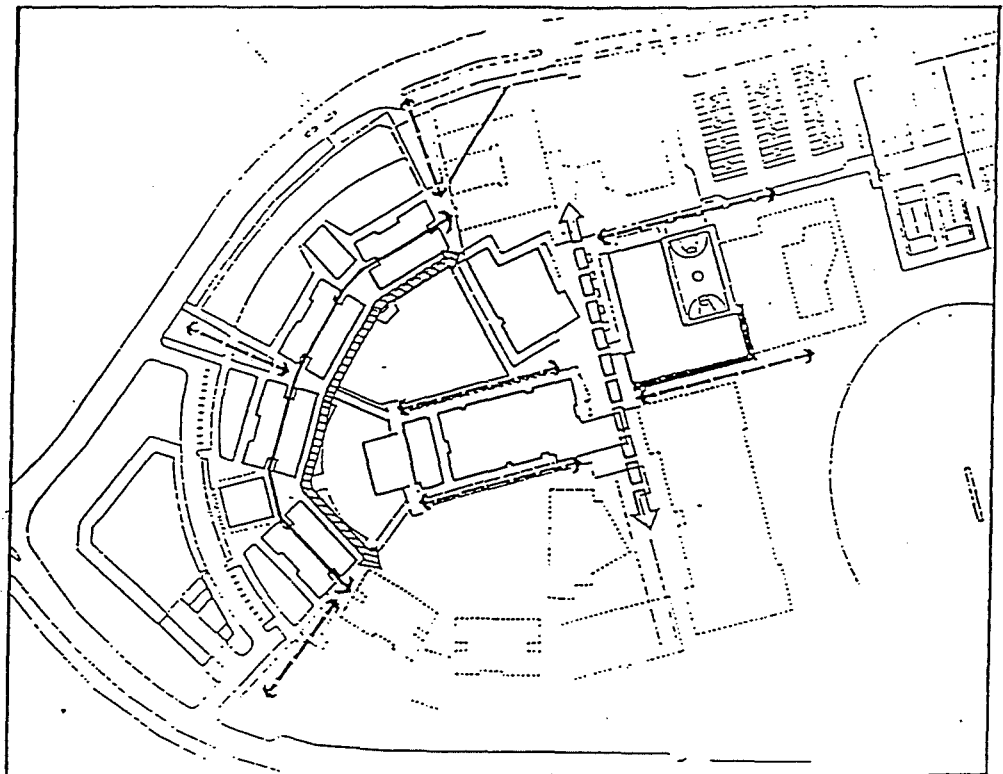
The roads had two interpersonal potentialities: firstly they isolated the school from the wider community by way of the distinct separation, exacerbated by the heavy vehicular traffic, effectively enclosing the school within a separate enclave. Alternatively, the roads served as a route for passers-by to see the school as a unified 'text' within the Ballajura suburb. As a modern, vast conglomerate of buildings, with the large titles 'Ballajura Community College' clearly visible from the road, the school 'hailed' passers by. Situated in this prominent position, it provided a strong sign that the school was of, and in, the community. It was not tucked away on a small side street, fenced and isolated from the community, as so many secondary schools had been in the past. The *Orientation* (O'Toole, 1994 :103) to the main roads, meant that BCC was clearly visible and accessible to the community. The roads and footpaths directed pedestrian and vehicular traffic past (and into) the school. Local people walking or driving to the main arterial routes to the city, main shopping areas and light industrial services adjacent to the school were highly likely to pass by the school.

The external walls, those facing the street, were designed in a semi-circular arrangement, which directed access from the main roads through identified entry points. Dense plantings between the roads and the outer walls of the school buildings formed a protective barrier from the strong North Western sun, and also served the function of deterring graffiti vandalism.

A bus embankment channelled students into the school, down the 'street' and into the circulation routes along the edge of the inner courtyards of the middle school.

BALLAJURA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

- MIDDLE SCHOOL
INTERNAL CIRCULATION
LINK
- MIDDLE SCHOOL MAJOR
CIRCULATION FOCUS
- SCHOOL AND
COMMUNITY ACCESS
MAJOR CIRCULATION
FOCUS
- OTHER PEDESTRIAN
ROUTES



STAGE ONE CIRCULATION

At the experiential level, the focus on community use of school facilities is realised in the architectural drawings through the distinctive 'street', which designates the areas to be accessed by the community. In a number of drawings, the architects have indicated individual room/ spaces for joint 'community use' - performing arts centre, gymnasium, library, lecture theatre and sports facilities are each within easy access of the 'street'.

The textual function at the zone of floor (O'Toole, 1994) indicates the cohesive relations between the different buildings. Circulation routes function to direct pedestrian traffic into different 'zones'. Middle school students are directed to classrooms and recreational spaces within the 'protective courtyards' away from the public. The 'street' works at the interpersonal level in that it suggests a relationship between the students and the community. In the realised form during school times, students used the 'street' for access to sports facilities during break times.

During the school day, the buildings functioned to support the notion of care and safety. The extended brick buildings, arranged as a semi-circle on the outer perimeter served as a 'barrier' (APL 1) to **protect** the students **from** the community. The 'street' was one of a number of 'circulation routes' and was designed to direct pedestrians to specified locations designated for community use. Because of student safety and duty of care, parents and the community did not have general access to the 'street' during the school day, but were required to 'report' to the Administration office. Notwithstanding that the motivation to engage the community within the school was an ideal, the practical realities of child protection, required that community access was monitored and 'policed' during the school day. The buildings therefore carried different power messages, according to the time of entry. During school times, the Administration Office became the focal point of entry and all visitors to the school were directed towards this building. We see then, that the experiential element of the street for the passage of pedestrian traffic is powerfully encoded for status, depending on the time of the school day.

Outside school times, when the Administration Office was not open, the 'street' served the function of directing the community to the spaces and rooms that were for community use. Community members pre-arranged access to buildings, having gone through a process of establishing 'suitability', according to the school's policy. Access to

and use of the school was prioritised according to the proposed activity. If the activity was one that would serve the needs and interests of the young people in the school and local community, then they were given preference. For example, if a professional tennis coach wanted to offer private tennis lessons to students after school, using the BCC facilities, he would be given a contract to use the facilities, ahead of someone who proposed an independent fully profit-based activity that was not directed at the students.

In addition to the large number of after school programmes offered to students by teachers and community members, there were also many requests for the use of the buildings by community groups and commercial operators. The buildings became a highly sought after resource within the community. Whilst the 'renting' of the buildings to providers of after school activities (e.g. police cadets, abseiling, martial arts, modelling, local sporting groups, yoga, fitness and gymnastics) broadened the opportunities for young people within the school, the school administration were the 'gatekeepers' of the buildings. Within the discourse of 'community use' issues included:

- The safety of students: what screening process was appropriate to ensure that community members who provided 'out of school activities' were not going to place the students at any risk? What was the school's responsibility in terms of duty of care, given that students often moved from classroom lessons to after school activities provided by community members, with no transfer of responsibility for the child, from school to parent?
- The administrative load: In WA there are no school caretakers or site-based janitors. Therefore, all administration associated with community use of school was undertaken by the school leadership team and school registrar. With over fifty groups using the school, this became a significant managerial task.
- Security and maintenance of school equipment and facilities: Unfenced open access made the school a target for vandalism and provided a protected environment for anti-social behaviour such as drug use at night and on week ends.

Vignette 8-2

I am shattered. Yesterday (Sunday) while having lunch with friends, the phone rang and it was EDWA's security. The green block (six classrooms) was on fire. The bins in the enclosure beside the building had been set alight and the fire was spreading through the roof cavity. I had had a couple of glasses of wine and not 'within the limit' so my husband drove me the thirty kilometres to the school. We stood there and watched, my heart sinking at the prospect of what lay ahead - the huge efforts of the students and teachers were being washed away with the spray of the hoses from the fire brigade. The press and parents were already gathering. It was everyone's nightmare. We had only been going for two terms and we were confronting another huge challenge. I phoned the deputies and told them 'the news'. We spent the remaining part of our holidays cleaning up, hosing down smoke-stained chairs, rescuing resources and organising six transportable classrooms for the beginning of the new term. I wonder if this would have happened had the school been fenced? (Larsen Personal journal, Sept. 14, 1994)

There is no doubt that the accessibility of the school to the community shaped the way that staff, students and the wider community materialised the notion of 'community'. The fact that the school was so visibly 'within the community' had great advantages. The students, parents and neighbours were fiercely protective of the school and 'kept an eye out' for potential incidents of vandalism. Nonetheless, there were incidents such as that reported in the above vignette that raised questions about the openness of the school and the vulnerability of the buildings to vandalism. Whilst the 'domestics' associated with the

management of such events such as the fire at BCC are inevitable, in policy terms, the 'opening up' of schools to the community clearly challenge traditional arrangements where schools are isolated and separated from the local neighbourhood. Locating BCC within close proximity of the community was a powerful semiotic. It changed the way students, parents and the community related to the school. The extended use of the buildings during week-ends and evenings meant that there were large numbers of people in the school at times when traditionally, schools are silent places.

8.5 Conclusion

There are many textual traces of policies that were woven into the plans and materialised in the BCC buildings. As early as 1973, the Federal government was calling for greater community participation in schools. The release of the Karmel Report (Karmel 1971) which signalled the need for increased spending in order to address issues of equality also called for greater involvement of the community in school affairs. At the time of the report, schools in WA offered limited opportunities for community participation in schools. Parents and Citizens (P & C) Associations were the primary vehicle for participation, although in general, their role did not involve input into school planning and decision making. P& C Associations generally supported the school through fund raising and served as a forum for school principals to advise the community of what was occurring in the school.

There was no opportunity for parents to participate in broader decisions relating to the direction of the school, nor have any say in governance issues until the release of Better Schools (Ministry of Education, 1987). Better Schools was a turning point for education in WA in that it mandated the formal establishment of *School Decision Making Groups* in all government primary and secondary schools. Whilst in their early days, School Decision Making Groups were often toothless tigers, the data suggests that EDWA saw the opening of BCC and Warnbro as ideal opportunities to expand the role of the community in the school. The invigoration of the role of the community had strong policy links to the devolution agenda (Hoffman, 1994) as well as the Better Government

Report (Government of Western Australia, undated) which emphasised the joint provision of recreational resources within the community.

This chapter illustrates how the redrawing of boundaries between old and new elements resulted in the realisation of new possibilities at BCC. The chapter illustrates the diverse range of policies that underscored the design and construction of the school. In the first instance, the practical solution of accommodating year seven students within the Ballajura district was clearly a strong motivation for building BCC as a middle school. Having made this decision, it is evident that there was genuine commitment from the EDWA Buildings and Facilities Branch to use BCC as a site for testing new and innovative arrangements around the notion of care for young adolescents, and the changing nature of the curriculum.

What is equally evident is that the process of moving towards new arrangements that encouraged flexibility and new curricular responses was strongly influenced by the legacies of traditional arrangements. These traditions were firmly imbricated in the design briefs and architectural drawings and ultimately the buildings.

For EDWA, the commitment to BCC middle school was tentative. Linking 'change and innovation' to middle schooling, and in particular, the inclusion of Year seven students within the high school setting, meant that the opportunity to establish a school that provided scope for trialling new ways of operating were clearly written into the building designs. However, the scope for change and innovation was shaped and influenced by the traditional policies relating to costs and subject traditions as well as cultural values. The boundaries of change and innovation were drawn within these arrangements and they sometimes rubbed uncomfortably with emerging discourses of flexibility. In some cases, traditional policies served as hegemonic devices giving rise to contestations. These contestations, evident in texts and discourses, did however serve as the 'motor of change' (Hodge & Kress, 1993 :64) in redefining secondary schooling in WA. At BCC the meaning of secondary schooling was renegotiated to incorporate new concepts and new arrangements including an integrated curriculum for lower secondary students, teachers teaching in teams, students grouped in teams within a home-room concept and a strong commitment to community involvement. In implementing these changes at BCC there were a multiplicity of intertextual references to change and

innovation that penetrated a number of domains within the educational arena. Pulling at one thread in the fabric of the school inevitably resulted in the need for adjustments and changes to other policy areas. As Hodge and Kress (ibid.) suggest:

New materials and new interests are incorporated into the old system, leading to a different 'fit' between language and reality, and a different set of relations between existing categories. The result is that all categories have a slightly altered scope or function within the whole, which is essentially a new system disguised as the old one.

(Hodge and Kress, 1993: 64)

Many school change researchers do not consider the impact that school buildings have on the scope and nature of change and innovation. At BCC, changes to the building policy were central to new representations of secondary schooling in WA. They served as iconic signifiers for the imbrication of new policies relating to middle schooling, changes to teachers' work practices and community involvement and community use of school facilities. The coupling of terms such as 'new and innovative school for the twenty first century' with new arrangements of lower secondary schooling was not accidental. There was a strong motivation to break down some of the established power structures that typify a 'faculty high school'. As I demonstrated in Chapter six, talking the project up, in newspapers, in the community and through 'modern hi tech buildings' paved the way for more radical change that simultaneously addressed a number of policy agendas.

It is evident that the architects and planners of BCC drew on a range of discourses in order to steer change and innovation towards more collaborative working arrangements for students and teachers and to institute an alternative structure for lower secondary education in WA that reflected changes in the curriculum. At the same time, they also sought to 'build in' greater participation and use of the school, by the wider community. The plans and specifications for the school worked as a powerful semiotic in the policy process. They drew together the multiple policy agendas that were circulating within EDWA at the time and represented the materialisation of new policies that were the basis new meanings relating to staffing, curriculum, staff and student relationships and community and school relationships.

PART FOUR

CHAPTER NINE

A CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

9.1 Introduction

This thesis investigated the impact of existing and emerging policies on the establishment of a new secondary school in WA. In the thesis I have analysed the process of establishing a new school within the context of shifting social and political agendas from the perspective of Foundation Principal. The account has included a combination of methods including social semiotics, critical discourse analysis and a strong autobiographical component because it was this combination of methods which provided the opportunity for uncovering an alternative view of change and innovation. The 'twists and turns of the story' (Graham, 1991: 140) have focussed on how discourses of change and innovation gave rise to new meanings of secondary schooling within the Western Australian context.

This chapter provides a synthesis of the multiple strands of the research. I will discuss the main findings in relation to the research questions and then include a discussion on the value of the chosen research methods in order to elucidate the theoretical contributions of the study. This discussion will include a critique of the study, focussing on both the strengths and weaknesses. I will conclude the chapter with a discussion of implications for future research in relation to change and innovation in secondary schools.

9.2 Main Findings

Like many other education systems moving towards a decentralised model (Dale, 1997; Edwards, 1992; Olssen, 1996) at the time of opening BCC, EDWA was contending with multiple policy changes. These included the introduction of an outcomes based

curriculum framework, site-based merit selection of teachers and principals, performance management, and community participation. Many of these changes bore intertextual traces to texts that circulated in national and international arenas spanning the previous twenty years or more. In Chapter four I discussed the notion of intertextuality and I think this concept is important to this final discussion. Drawing on the work of Kress (undated) and Kristeva (in Fairclough, 1992) I suggested that the concept of intertextuality clarifies how history is inserted into texts and how individual texts are inserted into history (Fairclough, 1992:102). If we think of policy as the ongoing process of semiosis which is materialised in and through texts, we can better understand why it is so difficult to unravel the dynamics of educational policy. Policy researchers such as Bowe et al. (1992) and Fulcher (1989) have endeavoured to capture the complexity of policy processes through their respective models. In the case of Bowe et al.'s model, which is designed to serve as a heuristic, there are strong suggestions of intertextuality at work. That is, Bowe et al. use their model to indicate the dynamic writing up and writing down of policy within each of the three major policy contexts (Context of Influence, Context of Text Production and Context of Practice). As Bowe et al. (ibid) suggest, a new policy text (referring to the National Curriculum in this instance) 'enters into, as a new element, the bricolage of teaching, the cobbling together of bits and pieces into a 'pedagogic discourse' (p.280). The process is a dialectal one - intertextuality implies transformation of texts into new texts. But as Kress says, textual transformation varies according to the number of intervening transformations that occur, via other texts (Kress, undated). Kress also reminds us of the importance of the interlocking social and historical actions, which are themselves imbedded in webs of social structures of various kinds, extent and size (ibid.). These two points are crucially important in understanding the dynamics of policy processes, as they related to the establishment of BCC.

At BCC the opportunity to simultaneously change a number of interlocking systems required the reworking of policies through multiple texts. It was clear that in the transformational process, attending to any one policy threw into relief a raft of connected elements associated with other policies. That is, the policy process required the simultaneous transformation of other texts. For example, texts relating to site-based merit selection threw into relief the issue of performance management, which

subsequently linked back to the criteria for judging teacher effectiveness and student achievement. Whilst the process of change at BCC has revealed itself to be difficult, the scope to simultaneously rework a number of policies was a critical factor in the overall success of the project. It is the recognition that no policy exists in isolation - that policy researchers and policy makers must necessarily attend to these semiotic webs, that is a key finding of this study. It is only through simultaneously transforming interconnecting policies that change in secondary schools is likely to endure beyond the short term. In practical terms this requires educational policy makers, both at the system and school levels, to systematically map the inter-relationships within and between policies and to recognise that if wholesale change within secondary schools is to be achieved then the multitude of policies must be considered. Without such consideration, costly and demanding changes inevitably become temporary aberrations and sometimes, abject failures.

There is a good deal of research that laments the durability of the grammar of secondary schools (Tyack & Tobin, 1994) and the difficulties associated with dismantling existing organisational patterns and behaviours (Rudduck, 1991). The attrition of change (Fink, 1997) is a common element in much of the educational research literature on change and innovation. This study has demonstrated that unless policy makers and policy implementers attend to the complex inter-relationships **between** policies, the attrition rate will continue to be high. The example in the previous chapter, relating to the changing of stoves in the Technology and Enterprise Learning Area is illustrative of the multiple variables that impact on change in secondary schools. In the example I demonstrated that changing one relatively minor aspect of the school buildings, in response to the articulated changes in curriculum, required the unravelling of a raft of associated policies. There were policy implications for employment conditions of teachers and home economics assistants, there were implications for policy makers who designed and costed buildings, there were implications for architects and builders and importantly, there were implications for what students and teachers would actually do, once the stoves had been changed. In the context of BCC, it became evident that each of the policy changes were intricately linked to existing meaning systems that were sedimented in other policies, cultural and curricular traditions, industrial arrangements and in some cases, legislation.

It is not surprising therefore, that there were enormous difficulties associated with breaking out of '(t)he tight weave of traditions and routines' (Rudduck, 1991 :28) that so often make schools an 'impenetrable fortress' (ibid.) to change. It was EDWA's failure to attend to the intricacies of policy implementation including the details of what exactly the policies would look like, and how indeed changes were to be effected, that contributed to many of the contestations.

However, there is little doubt that the government and central education bureaucracy embarked on a deliberate strategy to enact a number of key policy changes in establishing BCC. It is also clear that without the active involvement of the multiple arms of the bureaucracy that changes implemented at BCC would not have been effected. The very fact that there were large numbers of senior policy makers and EDWA senior officers involved in the establishment of the school indicates a strong intention on the part of both the government and the central bureaucracy to support the proposed changes. Nonetheless whilst discourses of change and innovation abounded, the 'inherited legacies' (Whitmore, 1984) of a highly centralised system founded on the basis of homogeneity were powerful regulating forces which resulted in high levels of tension and uncertainty for the community, BCC staff, and at times, EDWA policy makers themselves. The fact that the centralised bureaucracy operated in discreet departments, each with their own portfolios (staffing, curriculum, finance, buildings) resulted in various (and sometimes conflicting) mediations of the intended policies.

Whilst individual EDWA policy makers clearly had an agenda for change, linked to a broader devolution agenda, many of the policies had not been interrogated in terms of the practical implications for the school and the wider system, nor their connections to other policies. Notwithstanding that no policy can be fully mapped to uncover the intended and unintended consequences (Ball, 1992), the lack of strategic planning resulted in a high degree of uncertainty, extraordinary amounts of work and in some cases, overt hostility from and between key stakeholders. The example of the decision to include year seven students without clear policies relating to the charging of fees, DOTT times for primary teachers and costs associated with the longer term decision is instructive of one policy which was not thoroughly planned. Merit selection of teachers and the changing conditions for the employment of the principal were also examples of

policy changes that gave rise to high levels of uncertainty and animosity and contributed to unprecedented industrial unrest. The animosity came from EDWA policy makers, the Union and teachers and principals within the system. Clear strategic planning with attention to the consequential chain of policy changes could have reduced the difficulties experienced at both the school and system levels.

9.3 Winning Community Support for Middle Schooling

Policy decisions made by EDWA to involve the community in the design of BCC as a 'middle school' and a 'community school' were powerful influences on change and innovation at the school. The signification of these titles ('community' and 'middle school') paved the way for alternative arrangements that had not previously been formalised in EDWA policy. Bearing in mind that the inclusion of year seven students was not a typical arrangement in Western Australian secondary schools, EDWA used the extraordinary context as an opportunity for mobilising community support for proposed changes to lower secondary education in Western Australia. Having introduced middle schooling, other policies such as site based merit selection and changes to teachers' working arrangements were then grafted on to this policy. EDWA was proactive in galvanising support for the school by inviting community participation in the decision making through a clear mobilisation of bias (Bachrach & Baratz, 1977). The study illustrates the contradictory nature of a community-based social policy. Individual EDWA policy makers used the notion of 'community participation' in different ways. At one level, there is an appearance of manipulation and control exercised by EDWA over the local community. At another level, there is evidence that the community was proactive and supportive of the initiatives being proposed and implemented at the school. The participation of the community raises a number of significant policy issues. Whilst EDWA was openly advancing a model of devolution that could genuinely embrace local diversity, in real terms, the fiscal constraints and the logic of homogeneity were powerful forces that impacted on change and innovation. The scope for change at BCC was framed within broader system-level policies and imperatives. In other words, including year seven students at BCC was a pragmatic solution to a management problem that was

subsequently recontextualised within the middle schooling discourse. The study raises the question of whether the role of the community was intended as a strategy for community endorsement of the proposed changes, thereby giving political legitimacy to system-initiated change, or to provide scope for the community to genuinely exercise power in respect to local education decisions. The example of the contestations associated with the provision of post compulsory programmes at BCC is illustrative of these tensions. It was clear that at the end of the day the government had to make economically and politically defensible decisions about the system as a whole, rather than considering individual school communities in isolation. At the same time, EDWA and the government were navigating the tenuous political situation in a marginal electorate.

Whilst policy researchers have advocated a model of decentralised welfare society, where the notion of community has been advanced as the basis for a revived welfare state (Olssen, 1996; Peters & Marshall, 1996) and a basis for rebuilding communities (Atkinson, 1994) this study illustrates the delicate balance between the pursuit of the egalitarian project through community led school reforms and those initiated and controlled by the State. While there was strong evidence of neoconservative policies governing many of the decisions made at BCC, there was equally evidence that some EDWA policy officers were genuinely committed to the notion of community empowerment (Peters & Marshall, 1996). The community consultation process was clearly being steered by EDWA and the government. Nonetheless, the process was effective in encouraging and promoting a sense of cohesion and community (Olssen, *ibid.*) for the students, teachers and community members of Ballajura. A core issue raised in the study is the extent to which the notion of community participation can result in genuinely shared power and responsibility to determine educational decisions at the local level. The struggles associated with community participation exemplified 'the changing relationships between constraint and agency and their interpenetration' (Ball, 1994:21). The power relations were tenuously balanced in order to ensure that EDWA could 'manage' the 'community consultation' processes (EDWA SO 8) whilst giving the appearance that power was being handed over to the Ballajura community. As Codd (1988) suggests, 'if people believe that political decisions are the result of public

discussion, and if they have the right to contribute to that discussion, then they are most likely to accept rather than resist existing power relationships' (p.237).

9.4 BCC and System Level Impacts

Even in their nascent form, policy changes at BCC were to have a significant impact on the overall system. The *Local Area Planning Policy* (EDWA, 1996) incorporated the concept of middle schooling as a major platform for the restructuring of secondary schools within individual districts. Subsequent restructuring of education districts has resulted in closure of a number of schools and the establishment of new middle schools and senior campuses (Angus, 2000). In all cases to date, middle schools have included year 8-10 students rather than the atypical arrangement of including year seven students as was the case at BCC. At the time of opening BCC however, no middle school policy existed. Rather, what was evident through the interviews with senior EDWA officers, is that 'middle schooling' served the purpose of accommodating year seven students from the overcrowded local primary schools. The inclusion of year seven students and the employment of primary teachers alongside secondary teachers meant that new pedagogical arrangements could be legitimised within a 'pilot project'. Once tested, middle schooling then became a viable organisational alternative:

Ballajura became a lighthouse school. It gave the Department an opportunity to test whether new arrangements were practically possible in the local context. From that, lessons were learned. The system re-evaluated the building processes and improved on them in later designs. (EDWA SO 8)

At the same time, the notion of 'community' signalled a change to collaborative teaching models that were a radical departure from the traditional faculty arrangements in Western Australian secondary schools.

In terms of policy theory, it is clear that the adoption of policies that circulate within international and national arenas (such as devolution, community participation and local management of schools), without due attention to the local complexities and historical meanings is likely to be fraught. The example of merit selection of teachers is

a case in point. Whilst at BCC changes to recruitment practices were ostensibly aimed at providing greater local control for the selection of teachers, at the system level the policy is untenable. The size and geographical vastness of WA means that there are many schools that could not be staffed using a merit-based staff selection process. The 'stick and carrot' arrangement, whereby teachers are provided with incentives such as permanency for time spent in rural, remote and low socio-economic schools, ensures that all schools are adequately staffed. Whilst merit selection of teachers was introduced at BCC, it is clear that the concerns raised by the State School Teachers' Union (SSTUWA 1) relating to the broader effects on the system were not considered fully.

9.5 Redefining the role of the Principal and Teacher

Restructuring of EDWA embodied changing patterns of governance in respect to principals' and teachers' work. Individual goals were closely aligned to those of the school and the work of principals and teachers was recontextualised within the new discourse of community responsiveness and flexibility. Site-based merit selection accented the relationship between the local school community and the principal's and teacher's capacity to demonstrate commitment to the local community, and at the same time, implement new pedagogical practices. Site-based merit selection coupled with performance management represented a new means of institutional and corporate control. 'Empowering teachers' through smaller teams, encouraging flexibility and responsiveness and the use of constructivist pedagogies were also part of the discourse aimed at increasing the accountability of teachers. As Popkewitz suggests:

The significance of the strategies of reform in the problem of governing are in their intrusive qualities. The potential of constructivist discourses results from their linking people's knowledge of the world with institutional 'goals' in a manner which enables them to feel satisfied that the process will effectively reap personal as well as social ends. Inscribed in the concrete technologies of pedagogy are the correct *dispositions* and capabilities to be self-regulating and policing, so that the individual teacher is, ... not only able but also 'inclined'. (Popkewitz, 1996 :43)

This was a decisive shift in the monitoring and management of principals and teachers. Because of the lack of control of teachers since the introduction of Better Schools, at the time of opening BCC, EDWA was reintroducing a system of monitoring that was contingent on demonstrating particular dispositions towards team work and collaboration. In the event that the principal's or teachers' performance was deemed 'unsatisfactory' then the principal or superintendent could invoke the right to non-renewal of tenure. In this way, there were new meanings created which carried clear messages relating to new systems of inclusion and exclusion. Those teachers who met the requirements of the school were included - the pedagogical and collaborative practices became normalised. Those who were unable or unwilling to accommodate the required changes were excluded - they either chose to leave the school or were 'advised' to leave. From a Foucauldian perspective, we can say that the disciplining was not total, nor was it coercive. Rather, the production of knowledge positions (of the collaborative, interdisciplinary, team teacher/ principal who was responsive to the community) produced new power relations and new regulatory principles. EDWA used the school to 'push the boundaries' (EDWA PO 1) of change in order to restructure the recruitment and performance management policies, without prior consultation with the Union. It is not surprising that the SSTUWA vehemently opposed the changes and directed much of the opposition towards BCC.

9.6 Policy Making, Meaning Making and School Buildings

The study demonstrates that the buildings at BCC were a crucial part in mobilising support for the changes proposed by EDWA. As modern, 'hi-tech' facilities that were designed not just for student but also community use, the buildings were significant in the ideological steering that was taking place. Notwithstanding the changing meanings being built into the school, there were competing discourses that carried ideological and historical traces to previous hegemonies. In Chapter 8, the strong influences of established policies relating to the building of new schools were indicated. Through the use of social semiotic analysis I demonstrated the tensions between the articulation and implementation of policy. It was within this context that the data indicated the struggle that occurred between established traditions associated with the building of secondary

schools 'to formula' as opposed to building secondary schools as innovative alternative sites for the twenty first century. What was evident from the data, was that secondary school buildings are infused with meanings that are intimately linked to established values and practices of secondary schooling. School change researchers are often in a quandary about the powerful regulating force of the 'grammar' (Tyack and Tobin, 1994) and the attrition of change (Fink, 1997) in secondary schools. This study demonstrates that if education systems are genuinely interested in disrupting existing hegemonies, the funding for schools must take into account the controlling forces exerted by some policy texts (e.g. formula for spatial allocations relating to subjects). Contestations that occurred in response to proposed changes to buildings at BCC did give rise to changes to the organisational structures of the school. Allocating additional space for home- rooms was critical in disrupting existing patterns of student movement and the faculty structure. These changes were tenuously balanced within established arrangements relating to costs and the culture of secondary schools, which served as powerful forces in the overall impulse for change and innovation at BCC. Since building BCC, EDWA has embarked on a major capital works programme exploring a range of alternative configurations for secondary schools. Not only have the BCC buildings changed the standard for new schools, they have also informed capital works upgrades in existing schools. The tangible nature of the buildings was critical in developing new meanings of secondary schooling and community participation.

9.7 Reflection on the Research Methods - Researching Policy from a Social Semiotic Perspective

In Chapter one I suggested that social semiotics provides a theoretical and analytical tool for theorising how meanings are constructing in relation to policy changes. Social semiotics works from the foundation that meanings are not in the text or in the message, but rather that any text contains semiotic materials which the speaker, hearer, viewer draws on to make their own new meaning. Meanings are not however 'transparent' (Hodge & Kress, 1988 :262) in a text or other semiotic object. Different meanings are

made according to individual dispositions and histories, and the particular social context. Texts therefore carry different meaning potentials. In the context of this thesis, a social semiotic theory of texts provided the frame for understanding and theorising how policies are mediated and transformed by different sign makers, often resulting in conflicts and contestations. That is, policies clearly undergo a process of 'transformation-in-use, a constant remaking' (Kress, 1999 :4). Social semiotics offered the theoretical, analytical and methodological means for interrogating the vast array of signs that combine to give meaning to the concept of change and innovation. The form of semiotics employed in this thesis, social semiotics, crucially offered the means of connecting the macro-structures that formed 'the environment' with the micro-structures of the textual objects, which form the data for the thesis.

What is important in this thesis is that at the time of opening BCC there were **multiple** policy agendas simultaneously intersecting. Models such as those proposed by Bowe et al. (1992), Fulcher (1989) and Taylor (1997) whilst showing some level of dynamism, do not in my view, capture the complex intertextual relationships within and between policy texts. In this thesis I have demonstrated that policies are not uni-dimensional, nor are they implemented in a linear way: they are constantly mediated and transformed through a wide range of discourses and ideologies which intersect, clash and meld. Fairclough, (1998) states: 'Discourses and texts which occur within them have histories, they belong to historical series and the interpretation of intertextual context is a matter of deciding which series a text belongs to, and therefore can be taken as common ground for participants, or *presupposed*' (p.152, original emphasis). Throughout the study I have demonstrated that meanings were not transparent, nor could they be interpreted in isolation from other texts that were circulating at the time. As an example, 'middle schooling' was conflated with new meanings about curriculum and community participation, staff selection, performance management and Local Area Planning. While each of these policies had their own trajectory they were not separate. They were simultaneously constituted by and constitutive of other policies.

Individuals within the EDWA bureaucracy viewed policies such as 'middle schooling' from different perspectives and mediated and transformed the concept according to his or her own portfolios and personal interests. Some EDWA policy

makers viewed the inclusion of year seven students and the introduction of middle schooling as an enabling and desirable strategy: others viewed it as a 'mistake', suggesting that the additional costs were unsustainable within a homogeneous system. Given that many EDWA bureaucrats were directly involved in the school the often contradictory perspectives resulted in a high degree of uncertainty and many contestations.

At the school level mediating and transforming the myriad of policies required the navigation of multiple ideological positions in order to reframe new policies within the already semiotised culture of secondary schooling. Inside the belly of the policy process was quite different to the policy makers' reality. At the school level, we were not only mediating conflicts and struggles that related to the central bureaucracy (e.g. will we/won't we have year 11 and 12 students at BCC, despite previous promises?) we were also mediating these uncertainties with teachers, students and the community.

9.8 The Newness Factor

Research on new schools (Fink, 1997; Fletcher et al., 1985; Hargreaves, 1986; Woods, 1979) contrasts the exciting visions, optimism and ambitious plans with the pressures and micropolitics of establishing relationships, developing school based policies from the ground up, purchasing resources and building a strong sense of community in a school that has no previous history. Typically new schools experience early pressure from other schools and teachers (Fink, 1997) because of the 'fishbowl factor' and this was certainly the case at BCC. The fact that BCC was a new school provided a different policy context to that of an established school. As Spooner (1998) suggests, implementing change and innovation in a new school setting is quite different to implementing change in established schools. The multiple policy changes being implemented at BCC closely parallel those occurring in New Zealand at the time. Peters and Marshall's (1996) account highlights the discourses that were circulating internationally at the time. They cite Roger Douglas, a New Zealand Minister for Finance who said 'Implement reform by quantum leaps. Moving step by step lets vested interests mobilise. Big packages neutralise them. Speed is essential. It is impossible to move too fast. ... Use consultation as a means to improve the implementation of reforms' (p.69). The study has

indicated that there was clear evidence that policy changes were implemented rapidly and across a broad front at BCC. The combination of policy changes worked in the ongoing semiosis. The fact that the changes were so extensive meant that there was a disposition for a radical reshaping of lower secondary education. Recruiting primary and secondary teachers, changing employment conditions, structuring curriculum around an Outcomes Based and interdisciplinary model and involving the community all suggested to teachers and the community that things were going to be different at the school. As one of the senior policy makers, who were interviewed, changes at BCC were designed 'to send a message to the system as a whole, that things were going to be different' (EDWA SO 2). Because the school was a new school there was greater scope for moving to new paradigms. However, the study demonstrates that even given the 'space' for change and innovation, with the apparent support of the State, historical practices and existing hegemonies were powerful forces to be contended with.

Whilst the newness factor may suggest that the study does not have direct relevance to other school settings, the fact is, that in the current policy contexts in Australia, New Zealand, the UK and the USA schools are simultaneously dealing with multiple policy agendas that are all directed at reforms similar to those discussed in this study. Devolution, Outcomes-based learning, centralised accountability, performance management and community participation are all key themes in educational policy research (Carnoy, 1995; Dale, 1997; Marginson, 1997; Popkewitz, 1996; Whitty, 1997a). The lessons learned from this study are therefore instructive because they provide new insights that are rarely documented or discussed in educational policy research.

9.9 Reflections on my own epistemological journey

Thomas (1993) posits that there are two essential questions that should guide critical reflexivity. 'The first is, what is the truth quotient of the study?' (Thomas, 1993 :47). This question throws into relief the importance of examining our own values that influence the conduct of the research. In choosing to undertake research on the establishment of BCC, from the outset I was aware of the unorthodox position that I was adopting as researcher of the school at which I was Foundation Principal. I have been unable to find any similar

case studies that include Principal's accounts of change and innovation in the context of establishing new and innovative schools, other than Dean Fink's (1997) research of Lord Byron High School, a school at which Fink was a foundation staff member and later senior manager. I believe that my own study is important because it provides a unique way of engaging in research on school change and policy development which has not to my knowledge, been undertaken before. By adopting a practitioner/researcher position, I had a unique vantage point from which to describe the process of 'on the ground' change and innovation.

In adopting a social semiotic approach it is important to recognise that the question of truth can only be established in terms of the representations; the texts that have been the focus of the study. Kress and Van Leeuwen suggest:

From the point of view of social semiotics, truth is a construct of semiosis, and as such the truth of a particular social group, arising from the values and beliefs of that group. As long as the message forms an apt expression of these beliefs, communication proceeds in an unremarkable, 'felicitous' fashion.

(Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996 :159-160)

I have been fully aware that I was part of the research process - I was both subject and researcher. My own agency in the establishment of BCC clearly influenced the framing of the research questions, the methods chosen and the final account. The autobiographical components of the research, including the vignettes and much of the data analysis provide the depth and variety often missing in research studies on change and innovation.

My position as Foundation Principal provided me with the opportunity to be involved in the establishment of the school over a period of almost three years. This time spanned the early planning stages through to the fully operational stage when the school had almost one thousand students. As principal, I had privileged access to documents and policy makers who contributed valuable insights for the study. However, my 'privileged position' did create vulnerability for me as researcher and also posed some ethical dilemmas. Given my long history and association with EDWA it was quite some time before I could distance myself from the research site in order to critically analyse the data.

The selection of vignettes as well as 'principal texts' posed dilemmas in terms of the representation of myself, as well as the portrayal of EDWA within the research. The research questions required me to make judgements about how change and innovation were to be represented at BCC and within the broader policy contexts of the State education system. There is no doubt that I could have selected texts that sanitised the account and focussed exclusively on the 'exciting innovations'. By focussing on contestations I was adopting a more critical stance that was directed at uncovering the power relationships within the policy processes.

From a personal point of view I had to distance myself from the experience of establishing the school and also that of EDWA employee, in order to adopt a critical researcher position. Having invested an enormous amount of personal energy into the establishment of the school, I also had to contend with the dilemma of constructing an 'authentic representation' (de Molder, 1999 :251). That said, in undertaking research on the school at which I was Foundation Principal I have come to understand the complexities associated with change and innovation in a far more critical light. Relocating to England provided a 'second distancing' (Todorov, 1984) that was important in clarifying my own role in the establishment of BCC. Whilst inside the process of establishing and leading a new secondary school, it was difficult to reflect on the processes that were taking place around me. In the process of researching and writing the thesis I have returned 'home' with a different subjective positioning to that of a school principal:

Second distancing: I return home - this return can be purely mental or physical as well - but this 'home' is less close to me than it was before: I can now cast at it the look of a foreigner, comparable to that which I turned on the foreign society. Does this mean that I have become split into two, half a Persian in Paris and half a Parisian in Persia? No, unless I succumb to schizophrenia: my two halves communicate with each other, they look for common ground, translate for each other until they understand each other.

(Todorov, 1984 :4)

Throughout the course of writing this thesis, I have consistently come back to Todorov's quotation in order to understand how the process of researching the

establishment of BCC has forced issues of reflection on my different roles as principal and now researcher. In the course of working at the school I was completely preoccupied with the day to day demands that every principal faces in the management of a large secondary school. Re-reading my journal of one day in April 1994 reveals one hundred and twenty seven entries relating to the school day which started at seven in the morning and ended with a P & C meeting at eleven at night. There are entries relating to the mundane, the urgent, the 'can wait' the 'pass on'. There are entries relating to curriculum meetings, team meetings, parent meetings. There is a reference to my comforting a distressed child alleging abuse by her father, preparing briefings for the P & C meeting, struggling to find teacher relief, managing a crisis associated with a student injury - a kneecap protruding and the mother demanding that I not call an ambulance because she did not have insurance; remembering a loved one's birthday. All these events are interwoven with events relating to individual students, curriculum, resources, teachers' needs and expectations that the community had of the school. Whilst these events are the 'real world' of schools, there was little or no time to reflect on just exactly what was happening, and why many of the policy changes that were being implemented at the school were so difficult. 'Second distancing' (op.cit.) allowed me the space to view the processes of establishing the school in a more critical way - to interrogate the data from the position of 'researcher' and to ask questions from a different perspective - to look beyond my own experience to the broader policy contexts in which the school was established.

Thomas (ibid.) poses a second important question relating to reflexivity: how might the study be different were it to be redone? In reflecting on this question the immediate response was a counter question: redone by whom? The most obvious answer to such a question is that such a project could not be 'redone'. The research was undertaken in a particular period of time as part of my own biography and within the historical context of EDWA. Reflection on this question requires 'holding a dialogue with time' (Giddens, 1991 :77) in such a way as to imagine alternative realities, opportunities and lived experiences (Van Manen, 1990).

In considering the question further, there are a number of theoretical and methodological considerations that should be addressed. In the event that an entirely different researcher 'an outsider' adopted a participant observer position, shadowed me

for the period of the research, undertook the same interviews and documentary analysis I suspect that the findings may be different. In light of the discussion above, an outsider would not have the same access to documents nor perhaps to the most senior policy makers of EDWA. Negotiating access to senior government bureaucrats is a difficult process. An outsider would also not have had the same knowledge of the politics and practices associated with EDWA - they would not have belonged to the same speech community and would likely have received a sanitised 'public servant's' account of the events. An outsider would also not have lived the experience - they would be viewing the experience from a different subjective position.

There are a number of areas in which the research could have been improved. Each of the analytical chapters could have been expanded to a complete thesis in itself. The breadth and variety of data meant that it was necessary to bracket out areas of study. For example, it would have been of benefit to expand the interview data to include parents and community representatives in order to evaluate the extent to which parents and community representatives perceived their role in the process of establishing BCC. There was also a potential thesis on the impact of the State initiated curriculum changes, another major policy change being implemented at the time of opening the school.

The second question posed of the critical ethnographer by Thomas (*ibid.*) relates to the 'so what' question. The challenge of this question is for the researcher to reflect on the effects of the research and the social implications of the findings.

Whilst the research was conducted in Perth, one of the most isolated cities in the world, there are parallels that can be drawn from the study. The study interrogates the space between articulated policy intentions and the actual unfolding of these policy intentions within the 'here and now' of establishing a new school. The study illustrates the multiple policy agendas that were the focus of change at BCC. Many of these policies were directly related to changes in the political and social contexts at the time of opening the school. The context of a new school provided EDWA with the opportunity to push the boundaries of change and innovation in ways that were beyond that which might be implemented in an established school. A number of studies of new schools (Fletcher et al., 1985; Fullan et al., 1972; Hargreaves, 1986) illustrate the complexities of introducing new arrangements in secondary schools.

This study has demonstrated that in the context of Western Australia, the education bureaucracy was moving on a broad front of change which included the rewriting of not one, but multiple policies. There was a consequential chain to changing one policy that required the reworking of other policies in order to accommodate the initial change. The metaphor that comes to mind is that of throwing a handful of pea-gravel into a pool - the concentric circles of each ripple inevitably converge and influence that of the surrounding ripples. In some cases the convergence is quite direct and specific, in other cases there is a peripheral influence.

In terms of discourse, the metaphor serves to illustrate how signs gain currency through intertextual connections and are gradually naturalised into the discourse. Introducing middle schooling had a direct impact on curriculum. It raised questions about who was qualified to teach what subjects, the question of DOTT differentials between primary and secondary teachers, and the need for the 'selection' of 'specialist teachers'. In the same way, there was a consequential chain associated with the introduction of the 'community' focus. The sign 'community' served as an ambivalent term that could be used to encourage parents and the community into the school. At the same time, the term was used to restructure the working arrangements of teachers in secondary schools, to focus on changes to the organisational arrangements and the emphasis on interdisciplinary models for lower secondary students. As I demonstrated in Chapter seven, changing the selection processes for teachers and the principal immediately threw into relief the question of performance management. It was clear from the data that EDWA had not mapped the consequential changes associated with the initial policy changes being implemented at the school. It was only when contestations arose that the policy consequences could be responded to. In many cases, the process was one of crisis management rather than a coherent and strategic response. In the words of one of the interviewees, 'it wasn't policy on the run, it was policy on the sprint' (EDWA PO 1).

The transformative processes resulted in a constant interaction between meanings and every text, every word every utterance had traces of previous texts within them. The notion of 'innovation' carried meanings that were quite distinctive, for different branches of EDWA. The human resources branch for example, interpreted 'innovation' in the

sense that they could graft their own policy changes onto the design of the school. Curriculum superintendents and consultants interpreted 'innovation' from the perspective of curriculum. As a 'system school' BCC was the ideal site for trialing a whole raft of new policies at a single site. As one interviewee suggested:

(If Ballajura was opened in 5 years time it would have been a lot easier for you, because more would have been in place I think.

But possibly not, because if there hadn't been a Ballajura lots of issues wouldn't have been dealt with.

We wouldn't have actually known that this is an issue, the school grant issue, that the HR (human resource) issue about the conditions for primary and secondary is an issue, you know. So there's a sense that it had to happen so things came to an immediate head and had to be dealt with. (EDWA CC 1)

This 'heteroglossia' (Bakhtin, 1981, cited in Threadgold, 1997: 67) resulted in new meanings being constructed within the context of establishing BCC. The words however did not carry universal and transparent meanings. As Macdonell (1986) suggests, 'words change their meaning from one discourse to another, and conflicting discourses develop even when there is a supposedly common language' (p. 45). At BCC the remaking of meanings of secondary schooling were intimately related to the changing policy contexts of the State. Take for example the word 'flexibility' in relation to local school selection. In Chapter seven I demonstrated that for EDWA, the term 'flexibility' signified greater autonomy at the school level; it provided the opportunity for principals to select teachers who were 'suited' to the ethos and philosophy of the school and to allow for greater participation by the community. It also allowed for new recruitment conditions to be introduced which increased the scope for control and surveillance of principals and teachers. For the SSTUWA, 'flexibility' represented a threat to established practices. Flexibility meant a challenge to teachers' employment conditions: as the SSTUWA interviewee said, 'flexibility became a dirty word' (SSTUWA 1). In terms of curriculum writers, 'flexibility' meant changes to the way in which teachers and students worked. For the architects of the school, 'flexibility' not only meant building spaces that would reflect

the curriculum changes but also building spaces that could be used by the community in new ways. In other situations, the 'flexibility' that afforded the BCC community the opportunity to 'decide to implement middle schooling' had serious implications associated with the economics of longer term funding for the school and the issue of homogeneity of costs across the system. Within the policy arena, there were multiple ideological struggles taking place, and these struggles occurred within and across discourses. In the process, 'words changed their meaning according to the positions from which they [were] used' (Macdonell, 1986 :47). The study has shown that policy processes associated with change at BCC appeared untidy, serendipitous and haphazard (Ball 1994a: 24). However there is little doubt that BCC was viewed by policy makers and politicians as a testing ground for a number of policies which had been evolving during the preceding ten or more years. The thesis demonstrates the complex and often contradictory matrix of changes being implemented in a system that was simultaneously moving towards local management of schools whilst at the same time, increasing the level of centralised control (Grace, 1997).

9.10 Implications for Future Research

Whilst new schools have been used in other countries and other contexts as lighthouses for change and innovation in general, the literature suggests that such a strategy is not the most effective means of changing an education system (Fink, 1997). Whilst there is much research on the effects of changes such as devolution of decision making in other parts of the world (Whitty, 1997b) there is no research on the effects of devolution reforms in terms of students' learning in WA. Changes being implemented in WA for the first time at BCC, including the introduction of middle schooling, greater community participation and merit selection of teachers and the principal were all connected to the broader agenda of devolution. In the ongoing process of semiosis new meanings were being constructed about what it is to be a teacher, a student, a policy officer and a community member in a rapidly devolving system.

Despite the growing acceptance of middle schooling as an alternative model for lower secondary education (Angus, 2000), there is no Western Australian research that evaluates the effectiveness of this model. An evaluation of the effects of middle

schooling is essential. I am not suggesting a narrow assessment of the school along traditional 'school effectiveness' which have been criticised extensively (cf. Slee, Weiner, & Tomlinson, 1998). I am suggesting a far more thorough evaluation of BCC and other middle schools, in order to interrogate the broader effects of the policy changes that were adopted. Future research must include an assessment of how the new meanings of secondary schooling, which have gained valence within the education system since the opening of BCC not only impact on students' achievement but also on their lived experience (Van Manen, 1990) of secondary schooling.

Finally, I suggest the need for research that investigates the impacts of the 'community consultation' and focus on community at BCC. There are increasing calls for an invigorated role of communities in the planning and operation of schools. In New Zealand, the US and England and Wales there have been a variety of responses to such a call (Whitty, 1997a) Whitty (ibid.) for example, cites Hargreaves who urges that 'we need a new discourse that joins the themes of collaboration, care, commitment and community to those of difference, equity, rights, dialogue, and a wider sense of community' (p. 307). Some policy researchers are somewhat cynical of governments involving communities in educational decision making (Codd, 1988) suggesting that it is a ruse for winning support for political changes. Others are calling for a model that is based on 'authentic and genuine dialogical agreement' (Peters & Marshall, 1996 :134). At BCC we were living examples of the tensions and uncertainties associated with the notion of 'community participation', a term that abounds in current educational discourse. At BCC the term 'community' was used variously, both as an enabling and a controlling concept in the policy process. Change and innovation was materialised within these conflicting discourses. Nonetheless, the philosophy of 'the community' has permeated the curriculum and the positioning of the school in respect to the community. The questions that need further researching are those that Whitty (1997) poses: 'what are the appropriate constituencies through which to express community interests...? What do we mean by communities? What forms of democracy can express their complexity? How do we develop a radical pluralist conception of citizenship that involves creating unity without denying specificity (p.307)?' These questions force issues associated with the

role of the State in determining the direction of community participation in the public education sector.

In terms of policy theory, this study demonstrates that the intersection of multiple policies threw into relief the complexity of implementing change within a highly centralised system that was moving towards a more devolved model. From the perspective of Bowe et al.s' policy model, there is clearly a far greater level of complexity than the implementation of a single policy. The homologies between policy discourses meant that policy was being contested and changed across a broad front. It was also clear that the State played a major role in the redefinition of secondary schooling within the public education system. We should note however, that while the central bureaucracy and the government were allegedly devolving decision making and accountability to the Ballajura community it was very much a case of what Dale (1997) calls 'licensed departure' (p.280). There were clearly constraints on what could be decided and how the local community could participate in the school. Fiscal controls and electoral imperatives ultimately drove the school-education bureaucracy relationship. The 'decision by' the Ballajura community to adopt a middle school model was undoubtedly affected by broader EDWA policies. If EDWA had built a new primary school in the district to accommodate the excess primary students it is highly likely that middle schooling would have carried different meanings. The point is that the overall motivation to reduce public expenditure was a strongly motivating factor in the 'community participation' process at Ballajura. Were student numbers not an issue, it is highly unlikely that the middle school option would have been considered as an alternative for year seven students. Clearly the extent to which the local Ballajura community could decide the options for their children's secondary schooling were governed by imperatives for efficiency. 'Goal steering' (Popkewitz, 1996 :42) was directed at solving the crowding problems and at the same time, convincing the community that the middle schooling alternative was one that was educationally 'innovative'.

9.11 In Conclusion

As I reach the end of this thesis I am forced to reflect on the process of designing, opening, running and then researching a new secondary school. It should be evident from

the thesis that the 'double historicity' (Wulf, 1996) of which I spoke in the first Chapter has involved an enormous personal journey. In the first instance, the process of opening a new school in a highly volatile political climate provided enormous challenges. Any principal or teacher who has worked in a new school would know that the day to day running of a school requires imagination, compassion, high levels of energy and the capacity to solve multiple problems. At BCC, the overriding emphasis for school leaders, teachers and community members was the quality of the relationships and the teaching and learning.

In my position of researcher, I have taken a different position to that of a secondary principal, and have interrogated not just my own agency but also that of others, in the opening of BCC. It is this second positioning that has required me to look critically at the data and to understand how the processes of change and innovation were constructed in and through discourses. In theorising the process I have come to view my own part in the opening of BCC from an entirely different position to that of Foundation Principal. I came to the study believing that the school was a testimony to the 'art of the possible'. I left the school believing that students, teachers and the community were actively involved in a vibrant environment that offers new and exciting ways for young people to make the transition from primary to secondary schooling. The school is well resourced, equipped with magnificent facilities and is a central focus for the community. Whilst there were clearly contestations arising from the policy changes, they were equally enabling in a number of areas. Teachers and students at BCC were collectively involved in new and innovative curriculum models that have endured past the first flush of energy and excitement. The community is closely involved in the school, which now serves as an example for middle schools and community involvement across the State of WA, and further afield.

I have not changed my view of the school. I am now far more critical of the processes involved in the establishment of BCC and recognise that there was a strong agenda for change and innovation that was linked to a radical reshaping of the State education system. It is difficult to pass judgement on the 'effectiveness' of the policy strategies used in establishing BCC. It is clear that there was a meta policy at work, aimed at increasing central control whilst devolving responsibility and increasing

diversity within the system. Nonetheless, historical contingencies weigh heavily on a highly centralised system. The study indicates a strongly centralised agenda for managing diversity with the rhetoric of choice, flexibility and community participation being selectively used to manage system and government imperatives.

Jean Rudduck (1991) suggests that case study research assists teachers to develop critical judgements about their art and can serve as an important focus to improve the quality of teaching and learning. She also suggests that it is necessary for practitioners to claim their right to school research in order to 'demystify' the research process and to 'liberate curiosity and generate intellectual excitement' (p. 105). I would add that practitioner research provides essential insights into policy processes as they unfold within the day to day reality of the school. Living through a period of transition and using this experience as the focus for my research has provided a fundamentally different view of policy processes in action (Ozga, 2000).

In focussing the analysis on policy processes I have demonstrated that the 'sign work' (Fuller, 2000) of educational policy does not reside within a single finalised text. The 'two important issues of textual history and power, both individual and institutional' (Fuller, *ibid.*) are essential considerations for policy analysis and

... at any given moment of its historical existence, language is heteroglot from top to bottom: it represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between different epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles and so forth, all given a bodily form. These 'languages' of heteroglossia intersect each other in a variety of ways, forming new socially typifying 'languages'.

(Bakhtin, cited in Fuller, 2000 :83)

The new 'socially typifying languages' of which Bakhtin speaks are evident in the changes that were materialised at BCC and have since permeated the Western Australian public education system. These changes had their origins in a multitude of texts that circulated the educational arena in the years preceding the opening of the school. New meanings at BCC were framed by policies of the State, both past and present, and it was

within the school context that they were realised.

Many school change advocates suggest that teachers should be at the forefront of innovation through 'skilled change agency' (Fullan, 1993 in Datnow, 1998 :10) and 'indigenous invention' (Datnow, *ibid.*). At BCC, the school leadership team, teachers and the community were significant agents in realising new meanings of secondary schooling at BCC. It was at the local school level within the context of practice (Bowe et al., 1992) that new policies relating to middle schooling, curriculum, recruitment and the notion of 'community' were materialised. The unsung heroes of this story are the BCC staff and community members who grappled with new policy agendas in a time of unprecedented change and industrial action, in order to breath life into a school that now stands as a testimony to the 'art of the possible'. But that's another thesis.

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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX 1 - LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Portfolio	Coded Identity
1. EDWA Senior Officer	EDWA SO 1
2. EDWA Senior Officer	EDWA SO 8
3. EDWA Curriculum Consultant	EDWA CC 1
4. EDWA Senior Officer	EDWA SO 2
5. EDWA Policy Officer (Human Resources)	EDWA PO 1
6. EDWA Senior Secondary Principal	EDWA SP 1
7. EDWA Senior Officer	EDWA SO 3
8. Executive member State School Teachers Union	SSTUWA 1
9. EDWA Curriculum Consultant	EDWA CC 2
10. EDWA Curriculum Consultant	EDWA CC 3
11. EDWA Policy Officer (Buildings and Facilities)	EDWA PO 2
12. EDWA Curriculum Consultant	EDWA CC 4
13. EDWA Curriculum Consultant	EDWA CC 5
14. EDWA Curriculum Consultant	EDWA CC 6
15. EDWA Senior Officer	EDWA SO 4
16. EDWA Senior Officer	EDWA SO 5
17. EDWA Senior Officer	EDWA SO 6
18. EDWA Senior Officer	EDWA SO 7
19. Architectural Project Officer	APL 1
20. EDWA Senior Officer	EDWA SO 9

EDWA SO - EDWA Senior Officer - Interviewees in this category were in the most senior positions, including the Director General and Senior Policy Officers with portfolios relevant to curriculum and strategic planning.

EDWA PO - EDWA Policy Officers - Interviewees in this category held posts that were below the level of Senior Officer. These policy officers were middle managers with portfolios relating to Human Resources and Buildings and Facilities.

EDWA CC - EDWA Curriculum Consultant - Interviewees in this category were responsible for contributing to policy development and providing strategic advice to Senior Officers, Policy Officers and Schools.

APL - Architectural Project Officer - The interviewee was employed by the government architectural department (The Building Management Authority of Western Australia - BMA).

EDWA SP - EDWA Senior Secondary Principal - The interviewee was a principal at a nearby secondary school and was closely involved in the early planning and development of BCC, including participating on the Steering Committee.

Parents' input urged

THE Ballajura community will play a major role in planning a new high school for the area.

Through an innovative consultation process, residents will help decide

what curriculum and facilities are provided at the school, which is expected to open within four years on the corner of Illawarra Crescent and Cassowary Drive.

Preliminary planning began last week, with a meeting of affected school principals, Education Ministry representatives and members of the Building Management Authority's architectural division.

Discussions will be extended over the next few months to include input from parents and the wider community.

Suggestions will then be translated into drawings for further consideration.

Ministry planning manager Peter Barrett

said the Ballajura people had a real opportunity to decide what they wanted in a new school.

"There are opportunities for all sorts of things to be undertaken," he said.

"We will listen to any proposals the community has to offer.

"They can decide on the type of education they think is appropriate for their kids."

Mr Barrett said construction of stage one of the school would cost \$10 million. Final works would boost the total cost to almost \$20 million.

He expected 200 students would enrol in the first term, with a further 200 every following year.

"That will gradually

build up and by the time the school gets up to Year 12 it would probably be taking almost 300 Year 8s," he said.

Morley Senior High School principal Graeme Smith, who is taking part in the planning process, welcomed plans for a Ballajura high school.

He said it would ease the pressure on Morley SHS which was expected to reach full capacity next year.

Almost 40 per cent of his students were from the Ballajura area.

"Next year, when our numbers go above 1400, we will be into temporary accommodation like demountables and transportables," he said.

● More page 12

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PAGE 12 — EASTERN SUBURBS REPORTER MAY 26, 1992

Parents asked for school ideas

● From page 1

"Our staff will increase by at least five.

"The school did reach a population of 1400 in its early days so it can accommodate that many students.

"Once you exceed that number you start to put increased pressure on permanent facilities like toilets, canteen and library."

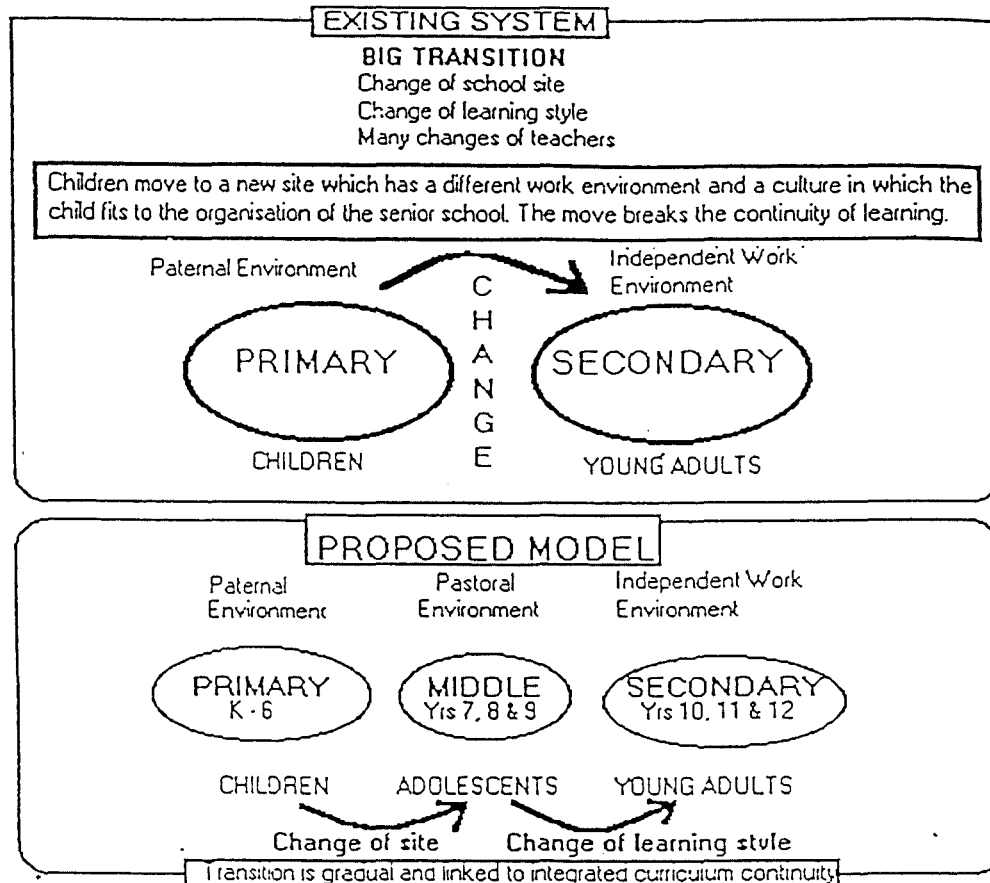
Mr Smith said he

would like to see the Ballajura community involved in planning its new school.

He suggested facilities like a swimming pool and theatre could be incorporated into the design and made available for public use after school hours.

"If we give the community the chance to have a say I believe the end result will be much better for everybody," he said.

APPENDIX 3



Jeff will be at the Ballajura Community Library at the following times to answer questions about the Community Campus and Middle School concept. A plan of the school will also be on display.

MONDAY 16 AUGUST 10AM - 2PM

TUESDAY 17 AUGUST 10AM - 12NOON & 3PM - 5PM

THURSDAY 19 AUGUST 10AM - 12NOON & 3PM - 8PM

On Wednesday 18 August, Jeff will be at Alinjarra Primary School from 8.15 - 10.15 AM and at Illawarra from 2.30 - 3.30 PM

ISSUES THAT HAVE BEEN RAISED BY PARENTS CONCERNING
THE PROPOSAL FOR YEAR 7 STUDENTS TO BE PART OF A
MIDDLE SCHOOL ON THE BALLAJURA COMMUNITY
CAMPUS FOR 1995

1. Students who will be going onto year 8 at another school will move schools twice in two years.
2. Some children may not have the maturity at the end of year 6 to cope with a change of school environment.
3. Younger students will be influenced by older students and the perceived social pressures this involves.
4. Extra travelling involved for some children a year earlier than originally planned.
5. Two groups of children will graduate from primary school at the end of 1994.
6. Students in Year 6 may be too young to assume leadership roles.
7. Why change a system that people know and are comfortable with ?

IF YOU WISH TO DISCUSS ANY ISSUE RELATED TO
THE PROPOSAL:

1. Contact the president of your P&C Association or one of the parent representatives on the Steering Committee.

Members of Coordinating Group

Colin Bell (Illawarra P.S. parent representative on Steering Committee)

PH W 327 1531 H 249 1763

Graeme Boardley (President, Illawarra P.S., P&C)

PH 249 1180

Sue Jordan (President, Allinjala P.S., P&C)

PH 342 8925

David McAndrew (Alinjarra P.S. parent representative on Steering Committee) PH 343 2947

Vicki Phillimore (President, Ballajura P.S., P&C and parent representative on Steering Committee) PH 249 1855

Jeff Phillips (Education Officer, New Secondary Schools Project, Ministry of Education) PH 264 5166

OR

2. Visit the Ballajura Community Library, see the plans and talk with an officer from the Ministry of Education.

**BALLAJURA COMMUNITY CAMPUS
PROPOSED MIDDLE SCHOOL FOR YEARS 7 8 & 9**

Information for parents with children in pre-school to year 5 classes at
Alinjarra, Ballajura and Illawarra Primary Schools.

THE PROPOSAL

The Ministry of Education is planning to build a Community Campus on a site bordered by Illawarra Crescent and Cassowary Drive with the first stage ready for the start of the 1995 school year.

A steering committee, which includes representatives from the three local primary school P&C's, has proposed that a Middle School for years 7 to 9 be established on part of the site as the first stage of the campus and the school open in 1995 with an initial enrolment of both Year 7 and 8 students.

WHAT IS A MIDDLE SCHOOL?

- A Middle School is a unique part of a campus with separate classrooms, canteen, toilets and socialising areas designed to meet the needs of adolescents whose ages range between 11 and 15 years.

- Special facilities and teachers are provided to ensure:

1. A sheltered pastoral care environment for younger students.
2. Greater time is spent on increasing learning skills before selecting senior-school subjects.
3. Continuing the same Year 7 curriculum and specialist programs while using advanced technologies and learning methods.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES?

1. Year 7 & 8 students are taught by teams of primary and secondary teachers who ensure the continuity of skill development in areas such as literacy and numeracy.

2. Special pastoral care programs focus on establishing effective inter-personal relationships between students and teachers.
3. Students have access to courts & oval, Gymnasium, Visual and Performing Arts Complex, Technology Centre, Library and Science Laboratories.
4. The transition between primary and secondary education is smoother and allows children more time to grow as well adjusted adolescents.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

- Recent research into education has identified that the intellectual, social, emotional and physical needs of adolescents today have changed, while schooling structures designed to cater for this group have remained basically the same as when their parents were at school.
- Currently many schools across Australia and overseas are creating new structures and programs to cater for the needs of adolescents.
- In Australia, several schools have implemented the Middle School concept and studies of these schools show that students have developed stable relationships with their peers and adults and are well motivated to learn and succeed.
- Past educational reform in Australia has concentrated on the beginning of formal schooling (Early Childhood) and end (Post-compulsory); the focus for the future is now on the middle years.

SECTION ONE: A MIDDLE SCHOOL FOR YEARS 7, 8 & 9

QUESTION 1.

What do you think about the concept of a Middle School for year 7, 8 & 9?

Is it a good idea?

(Please tick one box only)

YES

If you answered YES please indicate which features of a Middle School appeal to you most of all?

NO

If you answered NO please write down your major concerns.

DON'T KNOW

If you answered DON'T KNOW what parts need more explanation?

I like the idea in principal but my sons birthday is in December and he will only be just 11 years old when he goes to the high school. I'm not sure I want him to be in a pastoral care environment that young. How will children his age be protected from the social interaction that may not be appropriate for their age? I do believe the "middle school" should be staffed with primary teachers not high school teachers to

went

SECTION TWO: INDICATE YOUR PREFERENCE

ONE of the following recommendations will be made to the Ministry of Education.

QUESTION 2.

Which recommendation do you prefer?

Rank them in order

(1 = most preferred, 3 = least preferred)

1. Open a Middle School in 1995 with year 7 & 8 students enrolled on a trial basis only.
2. Open a traditional 5 year High School in 1995 with only year 8 students as the first intake.
3. Open the school in 1995 with a long term commitment to the Middle School concept.

SECTION THREE: DECIDING ON THE PROPOSAL

Before you answer question 3 think about how the final recommendation should be made?

QUESTION 3.

How should a decision be made about the final recommendation?

Please rank in order of preference

(1 = most preferred, 3 = least preferred)

A From a consensus of the combined preferences of all parents surveyed?
(Alinjarra + Ballajura + Illawarra Primary Schools)

B As a school by school ranking.

C By parents having individual choice over where children attend.

Thank you for answering this survey.

The information gained will be used by the Steering Committee to determine the final recommendation to the Ministry of Education on the configuration of the proposed Ballajura Community Campus.



FROM

The President

Brian Lindberg

THE DEMISE OF PERMANENCY, PROMOTION AND TRANSFER

ACT ONE.

At a recent meeting of the Australian Education Union Federal Executive, I requested that the Federal President, Sharan Burrow, initiate action so that the Federal Government withdraws funding from the Flexibility in Schooling Project. It is regrettable that such action is necessary, but the Education Department is misusing a Federal Government initiative to fundamentally undermine teacher and administrator working conditions.

In 1993, State and Territory Teacher Unions and the Federal Government agreed to set up the National Schools Network (NSN) to "promote the improvement of teaching and learning for all Australian students". This improvement was to be achieved by

* reform of work organisation and related pedagogy, and the establishment of a more supportive environment.

Each State established a Project and a Co-ordinating Committee as a sub set of the NSN. In WA this Project was called the Flexibility In Schooling Project (FISP).

The guidelines for participation in the NSN included that there be equal union and employer representatives on the Committee. Western Australia was the only state where this did not happen. The SSTU refused to participate in the Project due to concerns expressed and motions carried at Annual Conference 1993 and that only one SSTU representative was to be on the Committee. The Principles of Participation in the NSN also include: staff agreement about any reform process, and

"an understanding and acceptance of the industrial rights and responsibilities of all parties." During the first four months of this year it came to our attention that a number of school projects did not have the full support of staff and that industrial issues were not being fully considered.

This culminated with two community based steering committees submitting proposals to the FISP Committee to appoint the Principals at two new communities schools, Ballajura and Warnbro. The Principals to be placed on contract with performance appraisal before the contract is renewed.

THIS IS A MAJOR CHANGE TO PERMANENCY, PROMOTION AND TRANSFER RIGHTS.

The SSTU insisted on urgent talks with the Department to ensure professional and industrial matters related to these two new positions were negotiated and agreed. Despite these talks the Department ignored the Union's request for a negotiated and agreed position and continued with the appointments.

The SSTU immediately lodged an application in the Industrial Relations Commission to have the appointments and process overturned. We are still awaiting that decision.

The SSTU Executive decided that myself and Ross Pratt from the Education Committee should act as observers on the FIS Project Committee to monitor what is happening and what projects are being approved. At our first meeting (July) the Principals of three new primary schools suggested in a one page letter to the FIS Project Co-ordinator that they were interested in a new selection process for staff at the three new schools. I stated at the time that the "SSTU would seek to blow any such proposal out of the water". Concern was also expressed by a number of Committee members. In the end the Committee agreed that the three schools would be invited to be participating schools but no decision was made to support any new staff selection process.

Late in August it came to my attention that not only was the Department proceeding with the application from the three schools but that another six schools were to be included in merit selection by individual schools as well. Urgent talks were requested with the Department but before the parties could meet the Department advertised the positions.

Yet again we will use the Industrial Relations Commission to prevent this occurring.

Expression of Interest

Flexibility in Schooling Project Selected School Transfer 1995 - Teaching Positions

Under the Flexibility in Schooling Project (FISP) the following schools have negotiated that teacher vacancies for the 1995 school year will be on the basis of merit selection by the individual school.

The process applied by schools will conform to the Equal Employment Opportunity Act.

Expressions of interest are called for any teaching positions which may occur at the following schools:

Ballajura CHS* Bridgetown HS Halls Head PS* Kinross PS* Koorana PS Merriwa PS* Sawyers Valley PS* Wambro CHS* Withers PS *New School 1995 A school initiated teacher selection process will:

enable schools to develop selection criteria appropriate to the particular vacancy.

enable increased flexibility for individual schools to apply the "merit selection" process so as to attract teachers who can demonstrate a commitment to that school's needs and purpose.

enable a better match between the programs delivered by the school and the skills required of the individual teacher. (Education Circular September 1994, P.8)

Obviously the Education Department is not prepared to wait for the IRC decision regarding the principal positions at Warnbro and Ballajura. The Department has decided to push ahead with its devolution agenda and in the process create further disruption and disharmony.

A number of staff at neighbouring schools to the new schools, are extremely angry. The staff have put up with overcrowding in their schools for years, knowing that a new school was to be built. Many have purchased homes in the community as they were expecting transfer rights.

Members, this is nothing but devolution via the backdoor, it is especially repugnant as we were all promised by the Minister that there would be no further devolution until the Hoffman Committee has reported. Once again we see the real agenda, vandalism of our state education system by stealth.

Hiring of staff at the local level, by Principal or School Board, is the beginning of advertised fixed term contracts and the consequent loss of permanency, promotion and transfer rights.

If this is yet another example of your leader-

ship Mr Black then let me tell you we don't want it. As professionals we do not expect to be treated as Homes West clients. As educators we expect to see the administrative wing of our profession, the Education Department, to fight for the profession, fight for our professional rights, fight for appropriate conditions and fight for quality education. Then and only then can we expect to attract and retain highly qualified committed people to the profession.

To you Mr Moore, as Minister, we say - overturn EDWA's decisions until your Committee, "The Ministerial Independent Assessment Group on Devolution" set up last year by you to provide you with "independent advice on potential future developments in devolution" (letter to Principals from Norm Hoffman, Chairperson, dated 31 May 1993), has reported. To not do so will be a clear signal to teachers and administrators that your word and assurances are worthless.

Members, please keep yourselves fully informed on the above matters, discuss the issues at your branch meetings and what action you will be prepared to support.

Industry canes Moore and Hill over total lack of consultation

At a special forum convened by the Building and Construction Industry Employment Training Council (IETC), heads of industry, employers, industry consultants and unions were unanimous in their opposition to WADOT's proposals to relocate carpentry and joinery courses away from Leederville TAFE College.

Mr Terry Smith, representing Moore and Hill was at a loss to explain, after stating that "industry had been consulted", why no one at the meeting or the IETC had any knowledge of such consultation. WADOT had been caught out.

A representative from the housing industry indicated that the proposal to relocate to Balga TAFE, one of the most poorly accessible colleges in the metro area, could involve apprentices in an 18 hour day, because of travel problems. There were moral and social ethics at stake, he said and WADOT needed to have more concern for its "clients".

Other issues such as inadequate space, poor planning, overcrowding, costly travel and lack of access to accommodation for country based apprentices were raised as substantial concerns that needed to be addressed before any relocation proceeded.

The forum was not satisfied with the responses given by Mr Smith and indicated that a working group be set up to address and give input on the proposals.

Forum praises quality of TAFE teachers

When Mr Smith stated that teaching staff needed to change and update their skills, as part of his reasoning for relocation, it was refreshing to hear employers refute his statement, by indicating that the training facilities and teachers in W.A. were the best in Australia - something the other States couldn't match.

Industry representatives were appalled to hear that teaching staff had not even been consulted over the proposed shift and many simply could not believe that the whole issue had been managed so poorly. — By Vice-President Matt Farrell.

Western Teacher In Brief

PAGE 5

WHAT MAKES A GOOD PRINCIPAL?

In this edition WAPPA President Tony Misich and SSTU Tribunal Rep Pauline Hutchinson give their views.

PAGE 6

UNION MEMBERS INVOLVED IN SALARIES CAMPAIGN

Update by Industrial Advocate Peter Malone

PAGE 7

STATE CONFERENCE IS

PAGES

10,17, 21

ELECTION NOMINATIONS

Nominations are called for Executive and the position of General Secretary, together with many of the Union's Committees.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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SECTION: 1.2 BACKGROUND AND PROPOSAL

The Education Department of WA requires a new secondary school to be constructed at

1.2.01 The WA Government School System

The secondary school is part of the two phase system of education in WA government schools.

Children may commence schooling in a year they turn five at a pre-primary centre. All students attend a primary school from Year 1 to Year 7 and commence secondary education in Year 8. In the secondary system, students complete three years of compulsory education from Year 8 to Year 10 and the majority continue with the post-compulsory stage of education in Years 11 and 12. Senior secondary schools provide a comprehensive education program for students for Year 8 to 12. This enables students to graduate with a Certificate of Secondary Education at the end of Year 12.

In the metropolitan area primary schools are generally located to be within the immediate neighbourhood area. Secondary schools serve several neighbourhood and are normally located centrally within the larger district. Community access and use of school buildings including sports halls, performing arts theatres, playing fields and hard courts is encouraged.

The WA system is moving towards devolution of authority and responsibility to schools to increase their flexibility to meet the need of students now and in the future. This will result in greater autonomy for secondary schools to determine areas of curriculum specialisation, school organisation and type and use of facilities. Consultation with the community to establish a school ethos and shared facilities is an essential element in the design process.

1.2.02 The Building

As a fully developed comprehensive secondary school the buildings accommodate approximatelystudents andteaching and ancillary staff. Varying configurations will apply depending upon the structure and organisation of the school.

The school will comprise a library resources centre, general learning areas, facilities for the study of science, technology, media visual and performing arts and physical education, as well as facilities for students to have lunches, and administration and support facilities for the total complex. The *Building* should form a complex of units located to enable easy travel between and within the components.

The buildings should be located in such a manner as to create pleasant areas for social purposes or informal teaching, such as courtyards and other external facilities, taking account of often severe weather features. The whole site should present a pleasing and functional environment in keeping with its location in the district.

All people spaces (other than the specified exceptions) must have windows and take advantage of views of the local natural or man made environments. Rectangular as well as square teaching spaces of varying sizes, staff accommodation and stores may be used to prevent a too pattern of geometric formality. The buildings should be of such design and materials as to create a non-institutional environment, which is pleasant and friendly for students, staff and parents. Attention should be given to the nature of different materials in particular areas, eg. the robustness of wall structures and materials in corridor areas. Access to and within the building should be uncomplicated and easy for all the main entrance should be clearly signalled in a design sense.

1.2.03 Site Planning and Development

The complex and its surrounds should present a sense of identity appropriate to a community facility within its local and regional environment.

The complex and its landscape should be designed on environmentally sound and appropriate principals, including energy and resource conservation. Consideration should be given to the preservation of "natural" environments and systems.

The site should be designed with an easy efficient vehicular and pedestrian circulation system, internally and externally.

External spaces should be designed to function under all climate conditions and for a variety of purposes including teaching and recreational activities.

The design should fully consider maintenance requirements and sustainability.

1.2.04 The Environment

The environmental design of the high school is to address:

- The impact of the building on the environment;
 - The impact of the environment on the building, and
 - The impact of buildings on proposed activities.
- A. The *impact of buildings on the environment* can be generally considered in terms of global and local issues. Global environmental concerns include issues such as greenhouse effect, ozone depletion, and the depletion of natural resources. Local environmental issues include noise and general pollution, waste management, water management and biological issues.

To address these issues the design is to ensure that the development is to be compatible with the ability of the environment to sustain the proposed development and associated activities. As such consideration is to be given to:

- Design for energy efficiency incorporating natural ventilation, daylighting, solar control and thermal insulation/mass;
- Design responsive to the biological environment; - water conservation, biological diversity;
- Design for noise control, minimisation of vandalism, and waste management.

- B. The *impact of the environment on the building* is more readily recognised and involves the protection of people (occupants) and their activities. It is therefore essential that a climatic design approach be taken to ensure that the building responds in an energy efficient way and tempers the elements for the benefit and comfort of occupants. The climatic design is to address issues of:
- Orientation
 - Wind control
 - Solar control
- C. The impact of the building on proposed activities is generally considered within the environmental design. Areas to be considered include:
- Acoustics: Speech Privacy
Reverberation
Noise intrusion - (traffic, aircraft, industrial)
DOSHWA Hearing Conservation regulations
 - Thermal: Climatic design
Thermal comfort
Thermal performance of building elements
Solar control
Natural ventilation
Daylighting
Minimising of energy use
 - Health: Indoor air quality
Building Hazards (materials e.g. asbestos, solvents etc.)
 - Human Circulation spaces and waiting areas
Movement Entrance and exit points
Movement/storage of equipment and goods

SECTION: 2

COST GUIDELINES

2.01 School Budget

The proposed total budget for the high school is \$.....

This budget includes but is not restricted to the following:

- Building Works
- Site works and Servicing
- Headworks Charges
- Loose furniture
- Equipment
- Fixtures
- Bore and Reticulation
- Landscape
- Government Fees, Charges, Levies
- Professional Fees
- Security, PA/TV and Telecommunications

2.02 Budget Control

The agent is to exercise a high level of budget control and is to ensure the buildings are economical to run and maintain. Some suggestions are:-

- Simple well designed and detailed building fabric.
- No excessive volumes.
- Natural light, heat, ventilation systems.
- Compact designs to reduce floor area and site coverage.
- Adaptable to changing technological needs.

SECTION: 3

SCHEDULE OF AREAS

3.01 *Overall Functional Relationships*

3.01.1 *The Library Resource Centre*

The Library Resources Centre is to be centrally located in the complex and must be easily accessible from the General Learning Areas and Specialist Areas so that students and staff can make ready use of the services, materials and equipment available.

The Library should be able to be used without other areas of the school being open. It may also serve as the communication centre for Internet and a Local Area Network.

3.01.2 *General Learning Areas*

The General Learning Areas contain the largest concentration of students in the school. Class groups will generally be of the order of 32 students and each teaching space will be fully occupied for approximately 90 percent of the time. There will be little movement of pupils to and from the area during lesson periods, but regrouping of students will occur within the section at any time to meet the requirements of teachers following their own lesson procedures.

The teaching spaces must cater for a variety of formal and informal arrangements of study groups under direct teacher supervision.

Their requirements may vary from school to school but should be evident from the school's ethos statement.

The students will be required to move regularly to the Library and the Specialist Areas in the school. The General Learning Areas should be located, with respect to the rest of the school, so that a minimum of time is lost to movement between learning sessions.

3.01.3 *Science Area*

The requirements for the safe distribution, use and maintenance of a wide variety of expensive equipment and materials, together with the services required for power, water, gas and waste disposal are best met by grouping the science facilities, including preparation and storage, in one block of the school. The location of the faculty should permit easy access to groups of students from the whole complex.

There is also a need to recognise the increasing demands of the horticulture and environmental sciences. These sciences require a suitable location for recycling, vegetable and plant propagation and green house activities. Appropriate facilities that meet these requirements, and be close to outdoor areas, can best be provided when all science and associated areas are located at ground floor level.

3.01.4 *Technology Area (T.A.E)*

Materials Technology, Food and Textiles and Information Technology facilities will be used by both large and smaller structured class groups. A central design area integrating these three areas will act as the focal point in the educational program of "design, make and appraise". The area should be at ground floor level and located for convenient access by students as well as vehicles making deliveries of timber, metals, etc.

Additionally, the community may use this facility out of school hours. Due to the high level of technology, particularly computers, used in these areas some form of dedicated security provision is required.

3.01.5 *The Arts - Performing Arts, Visual Arts and Media Resource Centre*

Performing Arts subjects have need for special acoustic isolation and should be grouped together. Visual Arts subjects need specialist studio facilities, with access to Performing Arts, Media Resource Centre and an external area perhaps associated with technology.

The Media Resource Centre needs to be accessible from the whole school for use by all subject areas.

3.01.6 *Administration Area and Student Services*

The Administration Area should form an integral part of the school and have a direct relationship with the front entrance so that its location is obvious to visitors. Student Services should be readily accessible to all students and to some extent integrated with administration. Health education and some community service agents may also be located in this area particularly if the school's ethos focuses on sharing such facilities with the community.

3.01.7 *Physical Education - Health Education*

The Physical Education and Sports Hall Area will be grouped as a single complex. It will comprise the gymnastics and games hall and possible area for Health Education. Some of the activities will be noisy and the area should be located so as not to cause disturbance to students in other school areas. Other activities require a close association with outdoor playing fields. All of the facilities will be required for out of hours use by the community and for ease of security should be in one building sharing common entrances. Convenient car parking should be considered.

3.01.8 *Canteen and Covered Area*

The building should be designed with a pleasant and inviting Canteen and Covered Luncheon Area, adjacent a sheltered courtyard space. This area should be easily accessible from major traffic flows within the school. It is likely that where the brief calls for a separation of a middle school and upper school there would be some degree of differentiation in facilities, hours of opening, goods for purchase, etc.

3.02 Overall Schedule of Areas Net Briefed Areas

<i>Area Schedule</i>	<i>No. of Spaces</i>	<i>Area m²</i>	<i>Total Area m²</i>
SECTION 4 - ADMINISTRATION			
Public Foyer	1	25	25
Student Foyer	1	15	15
Reception/General Office	1	80	80
Reprographics/Storage	1	60	60
Principal	1	20	20
Registrar	1	15	15
E.S.C Principal	1	20	20
Interview	1	15	15
Offices	3	15	45
Staff Common Room	1	180	180
Kitchenette	1	8	8
Male Staff W.C.	1	8	8
Female Staff W.C.	1	8	8
Cleaner	1	4	4
			503
SECTION 5 - STUDENT SERVICES			
Reception/Foyer	1	24	24
Store	1	5	5
Cleaner	1	4	4
Office	4	14	56
Waiting Area (sick bay)	1	14	14
Nurse	1	14	14
Treatment Room	1	14	14
Sick Rooms	2	12	24
Shower/Toilet (Disabled)	1	6	6
			161
SECTION 6-SUB SCHOOL FACILITIES			
Foyer	3	12	36
Staff Studies/Kit Alcove	3	54	162
Collegiate	3	20	60
Offices	3	12	36
Interview	3	12	36
Office	1	12	12
Flexible Office space	1	30	30
Resource Book Store	1	20	20
Reprographics Alcove	3	3	9
Male Staff W.C.	3	8	24
Female Staff W.C.	3	8	24
Cleaners Store	3	4	12
			461

<i>Area Schedule</i>	<i>No. of Spaces</i>	<i>Area m²</i>	<i>Total Area m²</i>
SECTION 7-EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT CENTRE (E.S.C)			
Principal - included in Administration			
Learning Area	3	40	120
Therapy Room	1	16	16
Toilet/Shower	1	20	20
Store	3	6	18
			174
SECTION 8-12 - LEARNING AREAS (LA)			
Learning Area	20	64	1280
Seminar	4	40	160
Resource Area	4	60	240
Storage	4	65	260
Technician	1	12	12
Technician's Store	1	12	12
Tiered Auditorium	1	120	120
Cleaner	4	4	16
Sink Alcove	4	3.5	14
			2114
SECTION 13-LIBRARY RESOURCE CENTRE			
Library Resource Area	1	480	480
Control Work Area	1	45	45
Entry and Desk Circulation	1	30	30
Library Administration Area	1	25	25
A.V Work Room	1	15	15
Communications - PABX	1	10	10
Student Group Room	1	30	30
Cleaner	1	4	4
			639
SECTION 14-TECHNOLOGY & ENTERPRISE			
Resource Area	1	140	140
Design Studio	1	45	45
Staff Studies	1	45	45
Dark Room	1	12	12
Kitchenette	1	6	6
Storage	1	20	20
Cleaner	1	4	4
			272
SECTION 15-MATERIALS TECHNOLOGY			
Materials Studio	1	280	280
Machine Room/Materials Store	1	65	65
Model Store	1	30	30
Tool Store	1	12	12
Equipment Store	1	12	12
Mechatronics Laboratory	1	75	75
Graphics Studio	1	75	75
			549

<i>Area Schedule</i>	<i>No. of Spaces</i>	<i>Area m²</i>	<i>Total Area m²</i>
SECTION 16-INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY			
Computer Laboratory	1	75	75
Business Laboratory	1	75	75
Flexible Laboratory	1	75	75
Seminar	1	40	40
Store	1	12	12
			277
SECTION 17-TEXTILES AND FOOD			
Food Technology	1	95	95
Human Development Laboratory	1	95	95
Preparation Area	1	18	18
Pantry	1	10	10
Store (Food)	1	8	8
Textiles	1	95	95
Stores (Textiles)	2	8	16
Fitting Room	1	2	2
			339
SECTION 18-AGRICULTURE			
Tool Store	1	10	10
Fertiliser Store	1	10	10
Covered Work Area	1	30	30
			50
SECTION 19-SCIENCE/ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE			
Laboratories (Dedicated)	3	92	276
Laboratories (Multipurpose)	2	92	184
Common Resource Area	1	92	92
Seminar	1	40	40
Preparation Area	1	50	50
Research Area/Technicians	1	12	12
Chemical Store	1	5	5
Store Room	1	5	5
Staff Studies	1	36	36
Cleaner	1	4	4
			706

<i>Area Schedule</i>	<i>No. of Spaces</i>	<i>Area m²</i>	<i>Total Area m²</i>
SECTION 20-VISUAL ARTS			
Painting & Drawing Studio	1	120	120
• Art Store	1	15	15
• Folio Store	1	15	15
Print Making Studio	1	100	100
• Art Store	1	12	12
• Silk Screen Wash down	1	8	8
• Print Area - Alcove	1	12	12
Ceramics - Sculpture Studio	1	100	100
• Green Store	1	12	12
• Sculpture Store	1	12	12
• Kiln Room	1	12	12
Dark Room - B/W	1	20	20
Dark Room - Colour	1	6	6
Dark Room - Store	1	4	4
Gallery/Circulation	1	60	60
Seminar	1	40	40
A.V Store	1	5	5
Collegiate	1	20	20
Staff Studies	1	20	20
Cleaner	1	4	4
			597
SECTION 21-PERFORMING ARTS			
Foyer	1	30	30
Performance Space	1	200	200
Chairs/Props/Store	1	50	50
Bio Box	1	8	8
Kitchenette/Servery	1	8	8
Green Room/Music Room	1	105	105
Store Room	1	20	20
Music Practice 1	1	20	20
Music Practice 2	1	12	12
Staff Studies	1	24	24
Male WC	1	8	8
Female WC	1	8	8
Shower/Toilet-Disabled	1	6	6
Cleaner	1	4	4
			503
SECTION 22-MEDIA RESOURCE CENTRE			
Seminar	1	40	40
Group Room	2	15	30
TV/Radio Studio	1	50	50
Audio Control Room	1	8	8
Visual Control Room	1	12	12
Editing	1	15	15
Multi-Media	1	30	30
Store Room	1	8	8
Staff Studies	1	16	16
			209
			331

SECTION:4

ADMINISTRATION

DESCRIPTION:

- The administration area contains the facilities which relate to the organisation of the school and its educational purpose. It promotes the welfare of students and staff and the development of sound relationships with the surrounding community. Accommodation should include areas for the school's executive staff, supporting clerical, storage and staff amenities.
It is the focal point of the communication process within the school and between the school and the community. This main address point of the school is to be easily identified and lead directly to the reception part of the general office. The Principal's office, ESC Principal's Office and Deputy Principal's office are to be closely related to the General Office to provide convenient access from the foyer for guests, visitors, parents, teachers and students. A staff room should be provided where all members of the staff can meet in informal and relaxing surroundings. It should be close to the administration area so as to establish closer professional relationships between senior members of the staff and their colleagues. Visitors parking and some staff parking should have direct access to the administration.
- The link between administration and student services is an area of discussion at this point in time and it is likely in the future that Student Services will take on its own profile with most of the student personal and career counselling taking place there.
- Student Services may not need to be closely linked to Administration, indeed it may be socially advantageous to have a separation so that Student Services is much closer linked with the every day program of the school.
Certainly it is a growing area of student focus whilst administration is likely to become more of a management focus.

Generic High School Brief - Preliminaries

Area Schedule	No. of Spaces	Area m ²	Total Area m ²
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SECTION 23-TELEMATICS

Lobby	1	8	8
Sending Room	1	9	9
Receiving Room	3	15	45
			62

SECTION 24-PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Hall/Gym	1	508	508
Gym Store	1	30	30
Staff Studies	1	36	36
Sports Store	1	25	25
Male Student Change	1	90	90
Female Student Change	1	90	90
Staff Change	1	9	9
Disabled WC/Shr	1	8	8
Cleaner	1	4	4
			800

SECTION 25-HEALTH EDUCATION

H.E. Learning Area	1	80	80
Store	1	12	12
			92

SECTION 26-CANTEEN & COVERED AREA

Preparation/Sales Area	1	90	90
Office	1	8	8
Dry Store	1	8	8
Cool Room	1	8	8
Cleaners Bulk Store	1	8	8
Covered Area	1	250	250
			372

*SECTION 27- STUDENT & STAFF
TOILETS/SHOWERS*

To Code Requirements

SECTION 28-GARDENER

Workshop (Office Etc.)	1	12	12
Store 1 (Machinery, Fuel)	1	10	10
Store 2 (Fertiliser Etc.)	1	10	10
			32

SECTION: 5

STUDENT SERVICES

DESCRIPTION:

- Student services is an expanding area with the number of full time staff ranging in a smaller school from 3.5 - 7.3 in a large high school.
- Student Services enhances the teaching and learning environment of the school by providing advice and counselling to students and support on educational, welfare, health, social and career needs.
- The area is frequently involved with interaction between parents and the school, and the school and police and other government institutions and agencies.
The Student Services Support Program (SSSP) is delivered by a co-ordinated team approach involving all school based personnel and linked to some external/community based service providers.
- The SSSP addresses the developmental needs, goals and concerns of all students and involves the following personnel:

SCHOOL BASED FTE (Full time Equivalents) POSITIONS

- 1 x SSSP co-ordinator
- 1 x School Psychologist
- 1 x School Nurse
- 1 x Youth Education Officer (YEO)
- x x Pastoral Care Staff (number varies according to school structure and organisation).

POSSIBLE SCHOOL-BASED NON FTE POSITIONS

- Aboriginal Liaison Officer (ALO)
- District Youth Officer (DYO)
- School-based Community Policing Officer
- School Chaplain
- School Social Worker(s)
- School Welfare Officer
- The Students Services Support Program has three focus areas;
 - Transition
 - Pastoral Care
 - Student Development and Learning

These three areas are concerned with truancy, behavioural management, crisis management, advocacy, pathways management, life skill development, community links, specific needs, learning environment and personal development.

- Discussion to be held with co-ordinator of Community Nursing.

SECTION: 5

STUDENT SERVICES

- The medical suite need not be directly associated with student services, but the nurse is often the first point of contact for many students so it should be adjacent if not within the student services block.
Ambulance access is necessary to the sick bay.
- Accessibility is a keynote point for students services both for students, staff and parents. In so far as student services can act as a sort of 'Drop In' centre for students, some form of separate discreet access for parents, police etc would be required. This should be distinct from the administration entrance.
Confidentiality, privacy and security of information is extremely important in this area.
- Alongside this, the collegiate aspect of vocational guidance, group counselling and curriculum guidance should be fostered to encourage students to freely use the centre.
- The Health Education Facility (Section 25) could become a part of the emerging student services centre, offering a large conference or workshop facility. Since it is also likely to be made available for a number of community uses it would sit very well in this centre. Proximity to both Performing Arts and Gymnasium would remain desirable, as is public accessibility to all these facilities.

ACCESS:

- Performing Arts
- Gymnasium
- Car Parking
- Administration

CONTACT:

Curriculum Consultant - Douglas Melville Tel: 264 5037
- Jeanette Dolman Tel: 264 4564
- Bev Vickers Tel: 264 4792

EXAMPLES:

American Video - Student Services in New Orleans'
Ref: - Douglas Melville

SECTION: 6

SUB SCHOOL FACILITIES

DESCRIPTION:

- A sub school facility tends to operate like a small Collegiate Administration Centre and pedagogic nucleus for a number of General Learning Areas, typically from between 5-8. This facility includes, Offices and Interview, Staff Preparation, Collegiate Meeting Room, Foyer, and Staff Toilets.
- There would be nominally three or four units in a typical High School of 20 general learning areas, depending on classroom arrangement. An additional office, flexible office space and a resource book store extend the facility in one of the Sub School Centres.
- The exact layout and program for sub school facilities depends to an extent on the arrangement of general learning areas and the structure of the school from a management and pedagogic point of view.
- The following accommodation list has been based on three sub school centres.

SECTION: 7 EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT CENTRE (E.S.C.)

DESCRIPTION:

- The objective for students with disabilities is to provide access to the physical environment of the whole of the school.
- The standard Learning Area for students with intellectual disabilities should not be too rectangular (ie not too long and thin), should be capable of taking up to 15 students and should be located within a standard Learning Area block.
One education support Learning Area for approximately 8 General Learning Areas is a ratio guide.
- Wheelchair access toilets to the new standards need to be appropriately placed around the campus and could be included in the sets of male and female student toilets.
- A therapy room and specialist shower/toilet room needs to be provided in a central location and not adjacent a particular E.S classroom area.
These two rooms could be built together but not necessarily so.
The therapy room could be situated in the gymnasium if it is reasonably centrally located.
- The ESC principal's office should be located within the main school administration, with access to an interview room whilst other various interview rooms around the school in sub school administration areas can be used as required closer to the specific E.S.C. classrooms.
- Bus access for disabled on to the site in as central a place as possible is required and covered access from the bus drop off to all parts of the school is necessary.
- The primary difference between an Education Support Unit (ESU) and an Education Support Centre (ESC) is that the ESC has a specialist principal, whilst an ESU does not. An ESU also may not have a therapy room or a specialised toilet/shower room beyond the normal disabled toilets, depending on each case.

CONTACT:

Education Officer - Pat Johanssen

SECTION: 8

LEARNING AREA (LA)

DESCRIPTION:

- In recent history General Teaching Areas now known as Learning Areas, have clustered into groups of 5 around a common activity area with a seminar room, (eg Belridge High School) storage and student toilets.
 - With a school total of around 20 LA's there were commonly four blocks attached to one or other specialist block - science, arts/craft, industrial arts and business education. These LA blocks often took on a faculty status devoted to either english, mathematics, languages or social studies.
 - More recently at Ballajura Community High School the specialist disciplines have been separated from the LA blocks and collected into a school or campus "street" concept. The LA's have been arranged in pairs of 4 classroom blocks with activity area and seminar, connected by an open covered area with sub-school administration and a collegiate staff/student meeting place.
 - This allows a variety of organisational strategies within the school, including vertical integration of year groups and the flexibility to support the transition process for students entering secondary school.
 - Although this has great potential for central teaching and pastoral care for lower school students it separates the learning areas from the specialist areas and in this respect lacks some integration for senior students.
 - At Warnbro High School an upper school concept was developed where L.A's, Resource Areas, Group Rooms, Specialist Rooms (Viz. Tiered Lecture Theatre) and specialist facilities were integrated around and along a 'pedestrian' street.
 - Recent discussions about learning areas with all curriculum consultants on how their specific teaching or learning is, or will be carried out in the classrooms of the future seems to suggest a number of factors:
 - Teacher directed learning will lessen and change.
 - Technology will be used in all classrooms -
 - L.C.D Overhead Projectors
 - Video
 - Networked computers
 - Laptop Computers
 - Group discussion areas within classrooms and in smaller appropriate group rooms will become the norm.
 - Common resource areas related to a cluster of classrooms around a special subject - viz social studies, english, science etc would be highly prized in the learning process.
 - Integration with all other disciplines and access to the Media Resource Centre is becoming essential.
 - Blackout or "greying" provisions are required in rooms where LCD and Overhead Projectors are used.
 - The location and size of store rooms within each learning areas should enable easy access from classrooms and adequate storage of mobile trolleys as well as reading materials and other teaching aids. Ideally storage room should be close to and between Staff Studies and Learning Areas.
- Storage layout should be walk in aisles with shelving on either side but no return end shelving creating difficult and dead corners.
- The use of compactus along one wall would be advantageous.

SECTION: 9

MATHEMATICS

DESCRIPTION

- Increasingly, mathematics is being seen as an integral part of the overall learning program within a school rather than as an isolated faculty or subject.
- Up to 10 mathematic classes may be conducted simultaneously within a large high school. While some clustering of classes may facilitate the use of equipment, there is a recognition of the need to support integration with other learning areas as much as possible.
- A range of technologies is now used in mathematics. These include overhead projectors, computers, graphics calculators. In some instances consideration will need to be given to networking computer facilities and access to information bases through facilities such as internet. Appropriate lighting is vital in order that these technologies can be used effectively. In addition, students frequently use other manipulative materials, often working in small groups. For this reason it is desirable that students can move around the learning environment with the opportunity to rearrange furniture.

CONTACT:

Learning Area Superintendent - Jayne Johnston Telephone: 264 4826

SECTION: 10

ENGLISH

DESCRIPTION:

- Generally English use normal LA's and in a large high school would need 6 learning areas at any one time, at least 3 with a permanent video facility. LA's now require darkening - blackout ability for video, overhead projector, film etc.
- English is the first subject area to pioneer small group work (4-6 students) and needs flexible furniture, with a common open space central to a cluster of LA's.
- Drama is a component of this English syllabus which includes performing, but is separate from specific performing arts area. To create open space easily for group and drama work is a prerequisite.
- Huge quantities of books for loan to students need storage, with $\frac{3}{4}$ of the storage for middle school and $\frac{1}{4}$ of the storage for upper school. A storage area adjacent LA's of at least L.A size is desirable.
- Computers are becoming an important tool and in the not too distant future each student will carry their own laptop. Each classroom should have network points to library resource centre and beyond.
- English students need work room facilities with wet area for model making, set design, newspaper production, film editing, video, T.V etc is critical as $\frac{1}{3}$ of the curriculum is devoted to media/film/television.
- Small quiet rooms for audio work, with sound proofing and up to 5 - 6 students are required. The music rooms in the performing arts centre are ideal for this, if they can be time tabled in.
- Debating is an important element in the English curriculum and the use of an informal tiered auditorium would be ideal for this.
- English has links with theatre arts, media, English as a second language, Library Resource Centre and social studies, although this is largely to do with a cross set timetable, in the case of the later, rather than real curriculum reasons.
- English staff have up to 15-16 teachers and need an area for working together either as a common English staff study area or common conference facility.
The staff study area needs particularly a large paper layout and collation area and adjacent photocopier.

CONTACT:

Curriculum Consultant - Gavin Morris Tel: 264 4808

SECTION: 11

L.O.T.E

DESCRIPTION:

- Until recently L.O.T.E. was a small learning area. This is now expanding with all primary and secondary schools expected to offer a L.O.T.E program by the year 2000.
- The learning of languages has moved from a teacher centred approach to student centred learning with a large proportion of classroom time spent individually or in small groups with a smaller teacher centred component.
- The focus has moved from the study of language and grammar to oral proficiency and is therefore a very active environment. Practically there is a need for group areas, in high schools with small media or listening posts (not language laboratories) and access to technology such as computer hardware and software.
- Remote delivery of language courses by telematics, video, computer, fax phone and satellite is becoming prevalent especially in country and more remote areas. A group of 5-6 students with computer, telephone and fax can make up a remote language group. Alternatively a number of high schools can participate in a language program directed and delivered by telematics from one specific school.
- L.O.T.E would need 3-4 LA's dedicated to language with students coming 3-4 times a week (ie shorter sessions more often). A typical class of 30 students and 1 teacher would need 1-2 computers, 2 listening posts (6 headsets) and video player. Storage of books, cassettes etc is necessary with perhaps a trolley system to deliver books to a specific classroom.
- A staff of 5-6 language teachers, with 4-5 staff teaching at any one time is required.
- L.O.T.E has links to several other Learning Areas in particular English and those such as Studies of Society and Environment and the Arts which provide a cultural context for language learning.

CONTACT:

Learning Area Superintendent - Pamela Moss Tel: 264 4759

SECTION: 12 STUDIES OF SOCIETY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

DESCRIPTION:

- Social Studies covers a broad range of subjects, geography, economics, politics, history etc and is linked to a number of Learning Areas, Science, English, Technology and Media.
- It has traditionally taken place in normal LA's in a teacher stand and deliver format but is seeking a more flexible environment for its learning to take place.
- Small group areas for self directed students, discussion areas with or without the teacher, group model making, computer research etc are necessary facets for the learning program.
- A more specific central area adjacent to the LA's with space for the above activities, storage of text books, atlas's, sets of broad sheets, field equipment, map and model storage would be an advantage. The ability for a darkened room for video, overhead projection etc in this space or at least an adjacent LA would be a necessary requirement.
- Pin up boards for display of work, broad sheets, maps and posters and white boards in small group discussion areas are necessary fixtures.
A sink and wash up area (see sink alcove) is also necessary for project and model making work.
- The potential to use a larger lecture theatre to hold 90-100 students would be most advantageous for the social studies area. This would allow singular delivery to a larger group, with subsequent tutorial groups working with teachers; and accommodate visiting speakers from politics, finance, environment or social services.
- In a large school (viz Kelmscot) there would be in social studies:
Middle school 8 - 10 5 year 8 classes
 5 year 9 classes
 5 year 10 classes

Upper school 11 - 12 4 geography classes
 4 history classes
- Access to a Media Resource Centre for project production will become more and more used and Social Studies classes need to be in close proximity to the Library Resource Centre.

CONTACT:

Learning Area Superintendent - Glen Bennett

SECTION: 13

LIBRARY RESOURCE CENTRE (LRC)

DESCRIPTION:

- This facility provides access to a variety of resource material, including books, periodicals, charts, records, tapes, cassettes, slides, films, audio-visual equipment and computerised information systems - CD ROM and on line access to remote data bases. It has specialist staff to organise these materials as an integral part of the schools education program. The LRC provides accommodation for a wide range of activities involving the use of library materials. The library program provides an opportunity for the development of skills in information retrieval, reading, listening, viewing and discussing as well as for intensive study, research, enrichment and pleasure.
- It has a clear purpose as a 'learning centre for students' and a clear position at the centre of the students learning environment.
- Some conflict arises if the library is to become a community library with respect to its position for community access and its position for the school.
- There exists a 'joint use policy' for a shared arrangement which needs to be worked through for each individual case - this may take from 6 months to a year to decide.
- The existing school library brief and size is good with 2 class areas and one reading area but would need to be developed in its access to technology and information retrieval networks.
- An area for blackout for use of LCD (Liquid Crystal Display) with overhead projection is necessary. The potential of a tiered lecture theatre nearby could be advantageous but does not obviate the need for a blackout area.
- It seems advisable to locate within the L.R.C. a 'Communications' Room for the central control of the tele-data network, housing CD Rom and Modem Equipment, patch panels and PABX.
- This will require the L.R.C becoming a first stage building, set up with Library Automation System installed which is an expensive item to relocate from any temporary accommodation.
For the first 2-3 years until the whole library is fully resourced and required some of the space can be used for other learning uses.
- The question of student bag storage is a difficult one with a preferred option having low level shelving racks for bags at 2 or 3 locations in the library area itself. The solution to bag storage can be an individual school preference.

CONTACT:

Curriculum Consultant - Norma Jeffery Tel 264 4539

EXAMPLE:

- 'Learning for the Future' - Developing information services in Australian schools.

SECTION: 14

TECHNOLOGY AND ENTERPRISE

DESCRIPTION:

- The Technology and Enterprise (TAE) is one of the eight Learning Areas that make up the key components of the curriculum.
- *Technology* is a generic term, and as a learning area involves the purposeful application of knowledge, experience and resources to create products and processes that meet human needs.
- *Enterprise*, refers to the students' ability to identify needs and opportunities in a variety of situations and to take action which meets those needs or opportunities.
- TAE comprises four interdependent strands of learning which are:
 - designing, making and appraising (DMA),
 - information,
 - materials,
 - systems.
- The main subject areas that contribute to TAE are, agriculture, business studies, computing, home economics and manual arts.
Other subjects, may have strong links to particular strands of learning.
Example: Media Studies to the information strand.
- The introduction of the TAE Learning Area has implications for the current standards of facilities provision and teaching methodology used within each contributing subject.
- While these subject areas will still retain some specialised functions and equipment, there will be a greater integration between them, particularly through sharing technology and common learning processes.
- Students should be able to move freely between areas through a Central Shared Resource Area and within this central space, to be easily supervised and visible to teachers at all times.
- The Central Resource Area may have within or adjacent to it opportunity for:
 - small group work and discussion,
 - computer networking,
 - design studio or CAD stations,
 - small darkroom facilities,
 - staff facilities,
 - kitchenette,
 - storage
- Typically, students will be engaged in:
 - brainstorming and research activities,
 - design drawing and development, most likely computer assisted.
 - workshop/mechanical/production,
 - testing/presenting/evaluating products and systems.
- New terminologies are beginning to replace traditional names and to describe changes to learning methodologies.

New terminology

Materials Technology

Information & Business Technology

Textiles and Food Technology

Existing terminology

Manual Arts

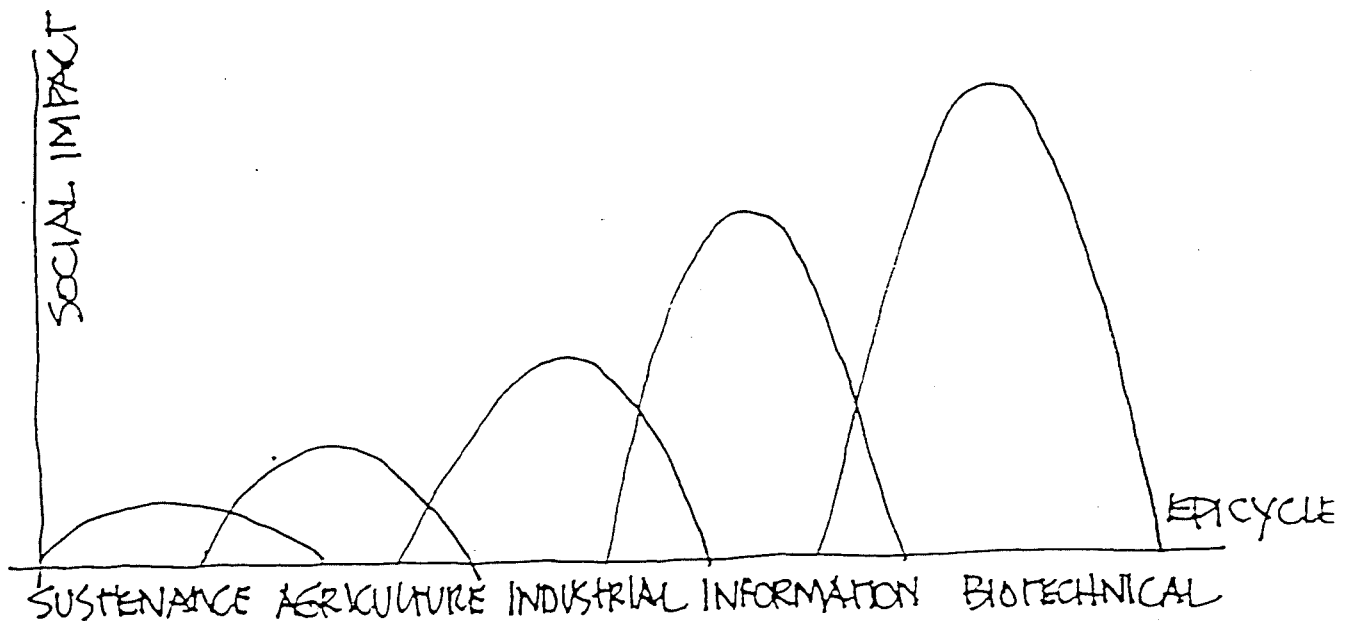
Computing/Business Studies

Home Economics

SECTION: 14

TECHNOLOGY AND ENTERPRISE

- Brian Jacobi, Director of Technology at Immanuel College, South Australia describes epicycles of technology overlapping from sustenance to biotechnical in a rapidly increasing time and impact cycle with our present time firmly in the information cycle with pressure from the biotechnical and dragged by the industrial.



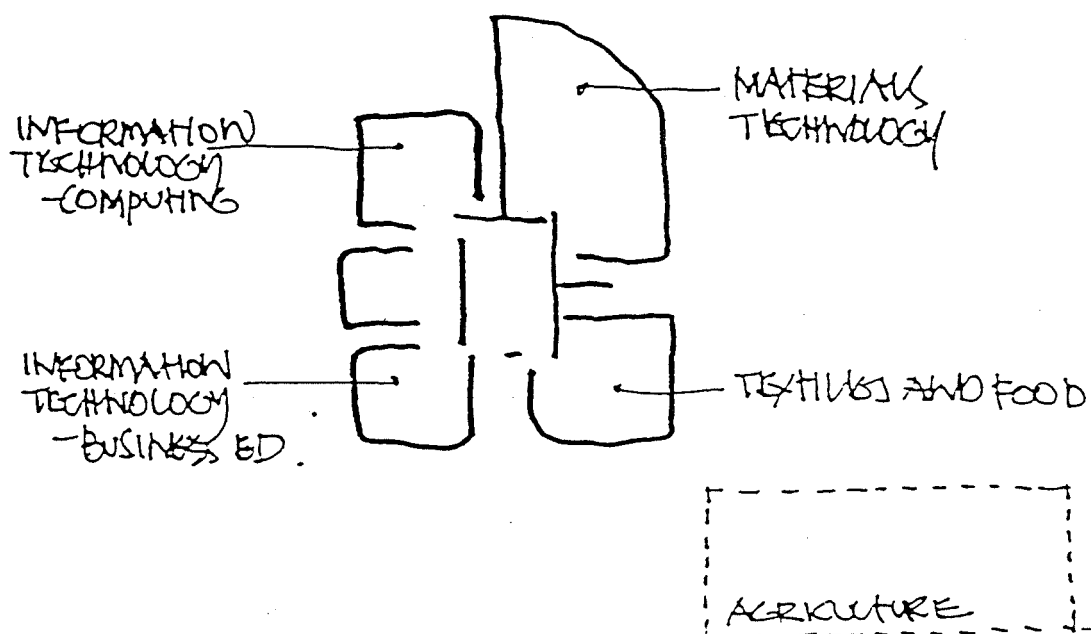
- The methodology for instruction is that:
 - student must move
 - overlapping supervision
 - open interaction
 - central thinking design area
 - access to broad range of equipment
- He describes three major strands:
 - strand 1: whole range of materials and equipment
 - strand 2: information technology multi-media package text/sound/video
 - strand 3: systems technology combination of individual components - and gate/orgate
- Students need to be capable with all new technology. High tech. manufacturing is the pathway and students need to have the right 'mindset' rather than specific trades.
- The technology centre needs a separate facility with security, out of hours use, manufacturers participation, consultancies as an active part and in a central position within the school.

SECTION: 14

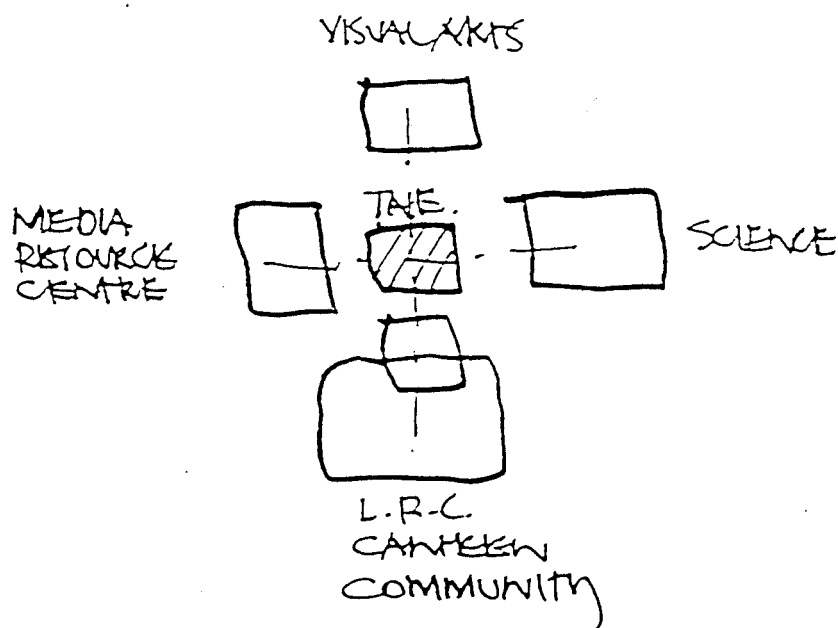
TECHNOLOGY AND ENTERPRISE

RELATIONSHIP:

DEPARTMENTAL:



SCHOOL



SECTION: 15**MATERIALS TECHNOLOGY****DESCRIPTION:**

- The introduction of the Materials Technology strand of TAE will have a major effect on existing and planned facilities for Manual Arts/Industrial Arts subjects.
 - Teaching methodology is moving from a focus of developing individual hand skills to that of problem identification and problem solving processes.
 - A student centred approach to DMA (design, make, appraise) requires more time being spent in the researching/designing stage than previously given. The role of the teachers changes also.
 - Emphasis is on collaborative learning and team production involving small groups of students working together.
 - New equipment is being brought in, causing problems in letting go of old technology and the perceived devaluing of long established practices.
- A large materials studio for using wood, metal and plastics, supported by newer technological equipment, machine room and materials store supports the primary function.
- The materials studio becomes an integral part of the design area, with its supporting functions of computing, graphics, photography, modelling etc along with the emerging studies and possible studios for electronics and robotics.
- It may be necessary to include specific traditional areas for some senior students in woodwork, metalwork, welding and pre-vocational studies. This will be determined for each school brief after consultation with neighbouring schools.

CONTACT:

Learning Area Superintendent - Margaret Banks Tel: 264 5021

EXAMPLE:

- Immanuel College - South Australia
- School of the Future - South Australia
- Lucas Heights School - NSW

SECTION: 16

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

DESCRIPTION:

- Computer studies is not about learning how to use computers but about:
 - creating information technologies
 - processing information
 - developing creative processes
 - creating new applications/programs
 - data basing.
- Business education is learning about business using the computer as a tool. There is a move away from secretarial/reception type skills. Law and Politics are likely to be regarded as more useful study areas.
- The environment for these studies is a technology centre set up as a Resource Centre like a library with staff operating as teaching/technologists similar in form to teacher/librarians. It is a hub concept where students will:
 - leave the whole class concept behind
 - work in groups
 - access design area and other specialist subjects within technology
 - use personal laptop computers
 - network to L.R.C and beyond
 - access multi-media

CONTACT:

Curriculum Consultant - Brett Clarke Tel: 264 4446
- Kathy Melson Tel: 264 4862

EXAMPLES:

School of Future - South Australia

SECTION: 17

TEXTILES AND FOOD

DESCRIPTION:

- Textiles and food is a cross-curriculum subject linked to:
 - Health Education
 - Technology
 - Family and Society
 - Service Food Industry
- It has combined with, Information Technology, Materials Technology and Agriculture in a Technology and Enterprise resource centre.
- As a consumer science it is moving away from the traditional area of home cooking and sewing and embracing areas of:
 - Design - food/textiles
 - Materials - food/textiles
 - Health - personal/society
 - Production - service industry.
- In this respect it will use the computing tools and business studies of Information Technology, design tools of graphic and fashion art and material testing tools of Science and Materials Technology.
- With respect to a senior school cafeteria it may be able to share and serve in the preparation area or at least share cool rooms and store rooms.

CONTACT:

Curriculum Consultant - Marilyn Yates Tel: 264 4856

SECTION: 18**AGRICULTURE****DESCRIPTION:**

Agriculture is the generic name for a range of enterprises and activities aimed at producing food, fibre and other plant and animal products to meet the demands of society.

The range of enterprises includes broad-acre farming (eg. wheat, sheep), intensive livestock farming (eg. pigs, fish, poultry), horticulture and aquaculture. The range of related activities includes primary production, value-adding and support services providing for the domestic market, the export market and leisure and recreation needs.

Agriculture is a technology itself, a means of satisfying peoples needs, which links strongly to the principles of the Science and social, cultural and resource use and management issues of the Studies of Society and Environmental learning areas.

- studies in agriculture and horticulture about sustainability;
- food and/or plant production and marketing;
- fibre production and marketing;
- environmental management, including landcare, and
- leisure activities.

Initial requirement is for a plot of land (0.25ha), serviced with power, water and security, for such activities as:

- permaculture;
- tree nursery; or
- hydroponics.

Land for animals is not a normal requirement, but may be negotiated at a later date. Issues of resourcing, week-end and holiday care need to be well debated.

It is possible to negotiate for an agricultural training officer (ATO), in lieu of the traditional gardener. ATOs have the mandate to independently supervise up to six students. They could assist teachers by integrating school property development and maintenance into students' learning programs. With appropriate experience, the appointee could provide support in all areas of the Technology and Enterprise curriculum.

Generally there is a need for the use of a flexible classroom, (power, water, computer network) not dedicated (viz Multi-purpose Science Laboratory).

Students will need access from time to time to materials' processing facilities in the Technology Centre to enable decisions to be made about various materials and different production systems. This will need to be negotiated within the school, depending on organisational structures for the curriculum.

CONTACT:

Curriculum Consultant - Steve Kitching Tel: 264 5318

EXAMPLES:

Kelmscott High School
Lockeridge High School

SECTION: 19

SCIENCE/ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

DESCRIPTION:

- The general science program for high school students requires facilities which permit a variety of teaching and learning situations to be used. These include:
 - small group discussion or enquiry;
 - small group practical activities;
 - whole group (class) discussion;
 - teacher demonstration;
 - student centred learning.
 - combined groups (two class groups)
 - access to larger area for visiting speakers (not necessarily in science facilities)
- Suitable science preparation areas and staff study areas are also required in close proximity to laboratory areas.
- The facilities require flexibility to cater for the classroom being predominantly student centred with a variety of learning activities in progress at the one time.
- They require small group access to:
 - computers
 - outside learning environments;
 - audio visual equipment;
 - reference and research resources;
 - research facilities
 - darkened areas for optics work.

Learning facilities require:

- one area to be able to be blackened for whole group audio visual presentations to small or large groups (60 students);
- ready access to other learning areas to enable integration of learning;
- a flow of student and staff access between areas.

Staff area requires:

- computer access;
- casual discussion area;
- individual work space.

CONTACT:

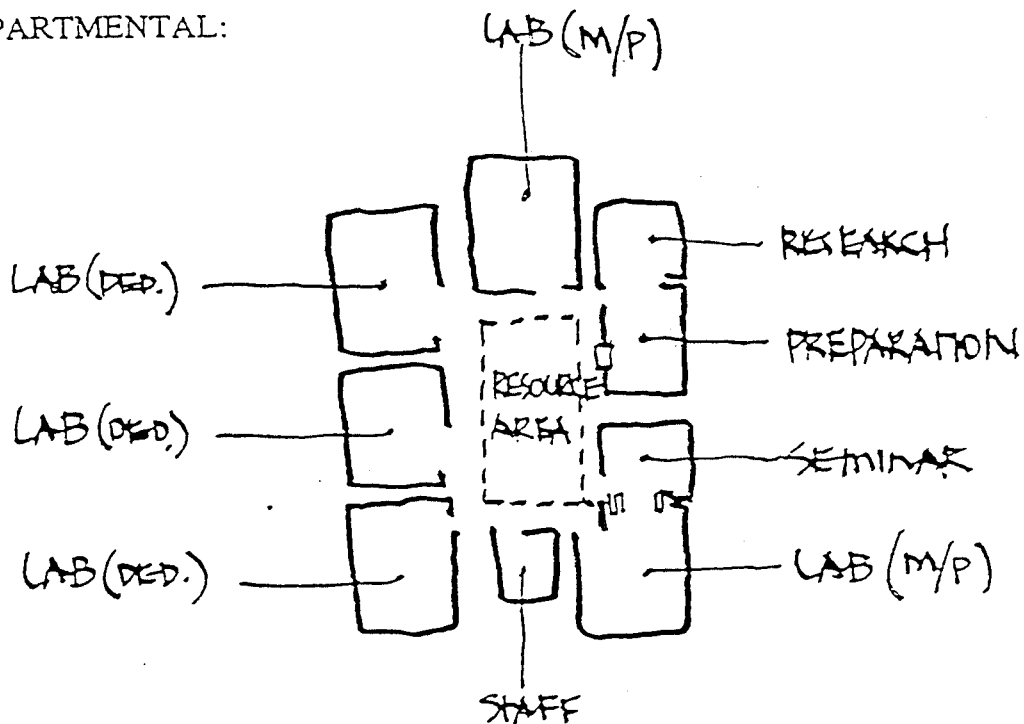
Curriculum Consultant - Fred Deshon Tel: 264 4824
- Rob Beresford Tel: 264 4691

SECTION: 19

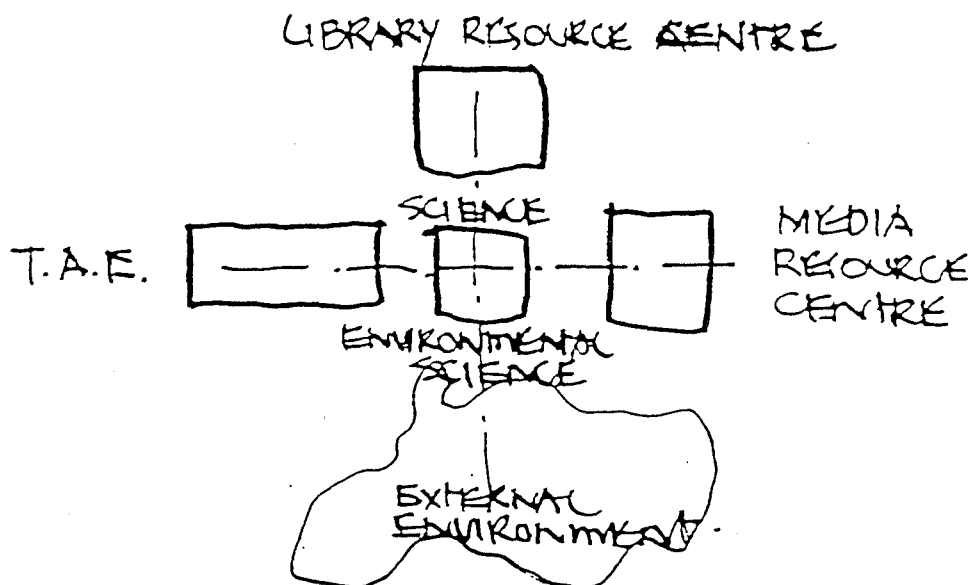
SCIENCE/ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

RELATIONSHIP

DEPARTMENTAL:



SCHOOL:



SECTION: 20

VISUAL ARTS

DESCRIPTION:

- Visual Art comes under the same learning area as Performing Arts and Music and a strong link between these would be desirable. Links to Media Studies and Technology and Enterprise are also likely through sharing of resources.
- The provision of facilities for Visual Art must consider the desire to create an informal studio-like atmosphere in which there can be an interchange of ideas and access to a variety of equipment and a wide range of technology and materials.
- Apart from a separate area for ceramics and sculpture due to incompatibility of materials a more open area, for painting, drawing and print making, broken up into smaller work units could be considered.
- It is likely that photography, video and computer graphics will lead to a stronger connection between Visual Arts and Media. The provision of facilities should consider this relationship.
- The need for a gallery display space is essential outside of studio wall space.
- The direct use of computers integrated into the studios is now a necessary requirement.
- Outdoor work space particularly associated with ceramics is essential. Whilst the concept of an outdoor work area linking Visual Arts, Performing Arts and Technology and Enterprise would be considered an opportunity.
- The idea of linking Visual Arts and Performing Arts into one building complex, although perhaps being different construction phases is to be encouraged. Apart from allowing some Performing Arts facilities (eg. Music Rooms etc) to be built earlier than normal there is an opportunity of amalgamating and sharing facilities; in particular the Visual Arts Gallery and Performing Arts Foyer, Staff Studies and the creation of a combined student/staff Collegiate room.
- Consider vehicular access for the delivery of clay etc.

CONTACT:

Curriculum Consultant - Digby De Bruin Tel: 264 4919

SECTION: 21

PERFORMING ARTS

DESCRIPTION:

- The Performing Arts centre provides a major focus for - drama, theatre, music and dance.
- Performing arts aims to make the arts an integral part of each students day to day experience. They are encouraged to explore and develop all aspects of the arts. Activities of the program will involve both class groups, small groups and individual students.
- The Performance Space brief is quite precise with attention being required to specific spatial and technical requirements. Refer to EDWA detailed Performing Arts Brief (May 1990).
 - lighting control
 - height of performing space
 - cyclorama track
 - acoustics
 - storage
 - etc.
- An expanding area is the need for electronic keyboard and computer linked music. To cater for this a combined green room/music room can allow, by use of an acoustic operable wall, for a separate music room for keyboard instruments which can be left in position as a music laboratory. The keyboard portion of the room could also operate as a standard seminar room.
- The idea of linking Visual Arts and Performing Arts into one building complex although perhaps being different construction phases is to be encouraged. Apart from allowing some Performing Arts facilities (eg. music rooms etc.) to be built earlier than normal there is an opportunity of amalgamating and sharing facilities; in particular the Visual Arts Gallery and Performing Arts Foyer, Staff Studies and the creation of a combined student/staff Collegiate Room.
- Expansion of the basic Performing Arts brief into a community complex is an area of negotiation with the community and local council. Expansion of the complex into a special school for performing arts within a district needs to be looked at the outset.

CONTACT:

Curriculum Consultant - Robin Pascoe

EXAMPLES:

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Geraldton - John Wilcox | • Tuggeranong Senior High School - |
| Canberra | |
| • Coodanup High School - cyclorama | • Ginninderra Senior High School - Canberra |
| • All saints - Bateman | • Newtown P/A High School - Sydney |
| • John XXIII | |
| • Guildford Grammar - David Law Davies | |

SECTION: 22

MEDIA RESOURCE CENTRE

DESCRIPTION:

- Media studies has traditionally been a course in cultural studies and operated under the English faculty it has had and continues to have a large practical component.
- Practical work is film, T.V., Photography, Radio and Multi-media.
- With changing technology and general access to this in terms of multi-media, desk top publishing, A.V studios, editing studios, T.V and radio studio/stations, its practical application is a combination of all the emerging technological advances in the media field.
- Whilst its value as an analysis of culture as a course will remain its practical potential, with access to emerging technological equipment is only just beginning and is an area for expansion, especially the multi-media area.
- Most subject areas will have some relationship to a media resource centre with its potential of producing in terms of text, video, tape, film and tele-conferencing, whilst areas of Technology, English, Visual and Performing Arts will be more directly connected.

CONTACT:

Diane Cole Tel: 264 4761 - Curriculum Consultant
Rod Evans - Cyril Jackson High School

EXAMPLES:

Kent St High School
Cyril Jackson High School

SECTION: 23

TELEMATICS

DESCRIPTION:

- Distance Education uses a number of mediums to deliver education programs:
 - by satellite to remote country schools through G.W.N television
 - by microwave within the Perth Metropolitan area (50 km radius and direct line of sight)
 - by telematics (an audio visual system using computer, modem, telephone and fax).
- All district high schools will be linked by telematics in the next few years and presently the technology allows for one teacher to send to up to 5 remote sites. A max ratio of 12 students to a teacher is considered desirable. These students may be located either at one or over the five sites.
- A typical sending station needs:
 - Computer
 - 5 Modems
 - 7 lines out to accommodate:
 - 5 modems
 - 1 "Hands Free" Telephone (5 lines at PABX)
 - 1 free telephone line.
- A typical receiving station needs:
 - Computer
 - Colour monitor
 - At least one keyboard
 - Speakers
 - 3 lines out to accommodate:
 - 1 modem
 - 1 conference telephone
 - 1 free telephone
- A typical high school might have:
 - 1 sending room
 - 3 receiving rooms

This unit needs a central location in the school perhaps linked with the Media Resource Centre, Library Resource Centre and Tiered Lecture Theatre.

CONTACT:

Curriculum Consultant - Julie Bowden Tel: 242 6300
- Rob Black Tel: 242 6318

SECTION: 24

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

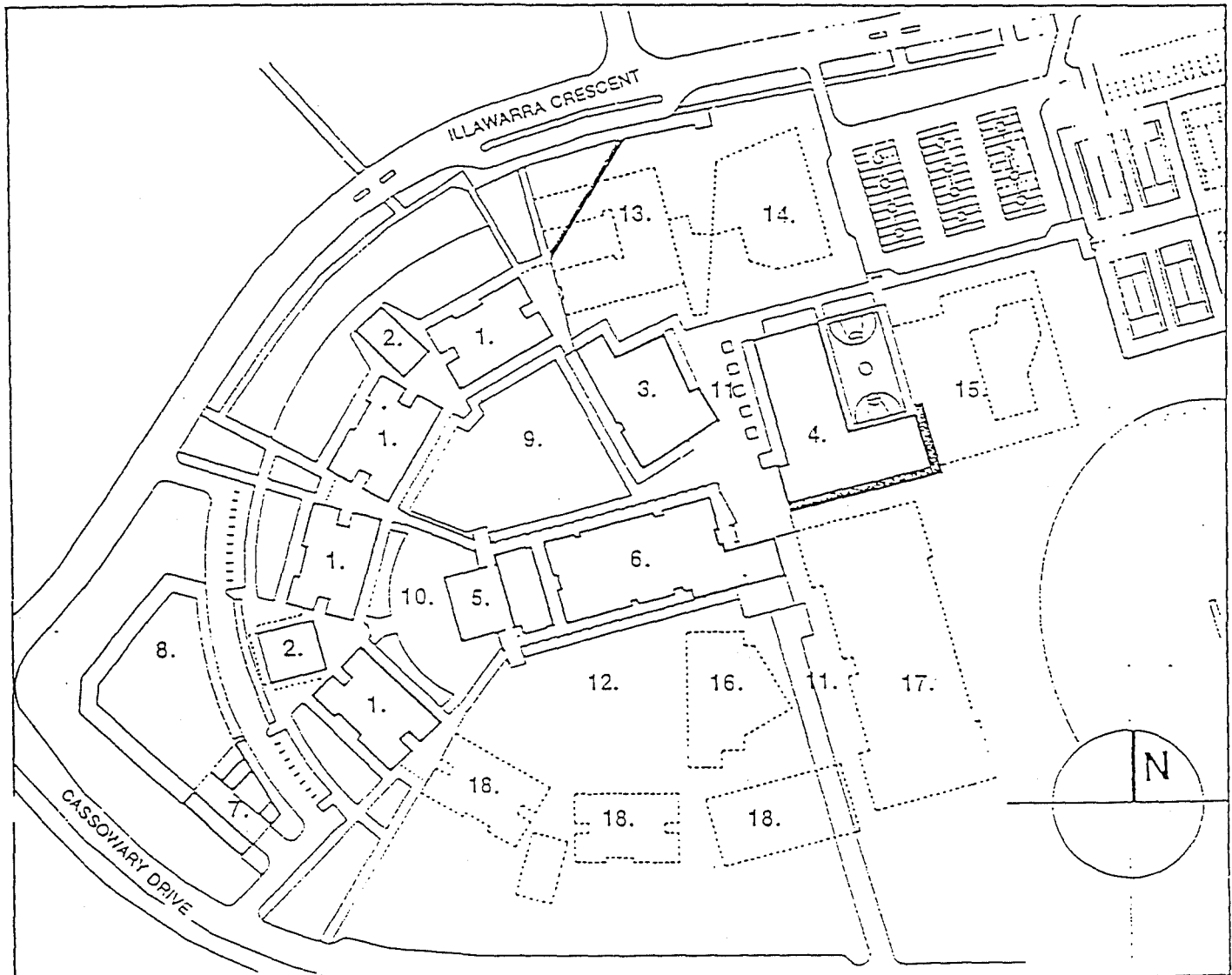
DESCRIPTION:

- Indoor sports is a growing area for both school and after hour community use.
- Team sports are:
 - Basketball
 - Netball
 - Volleyball
 - Badminton
 - Indoor Cricket
 - Indoor Soccer
 - Indoor Hockey
- Gymnastics is phasing out and very expensive olympic style gym equipment is not necessary.
Educational Gymnastics, however, is very much alive requiring simpler equipment
 - mats
 - balance beams
 - beat boards
 - vaulting boxes
 - Trampet
- Education Department regulation size hall is 28.4 x 17.9 or 508m²; 100m² smaller than the competition size of 32.0 x 19.0 or 608m².
The case for a competition size is primarily based on its flexibility for club use and may be built provided the council participate in financing the extra area.
- Possible future uses could include a climbing wall, hit-up wall for handball, weights area and fitness testing.

CONTACT:

P.E Review Project Officer John Gibson Telephone: 264 4937

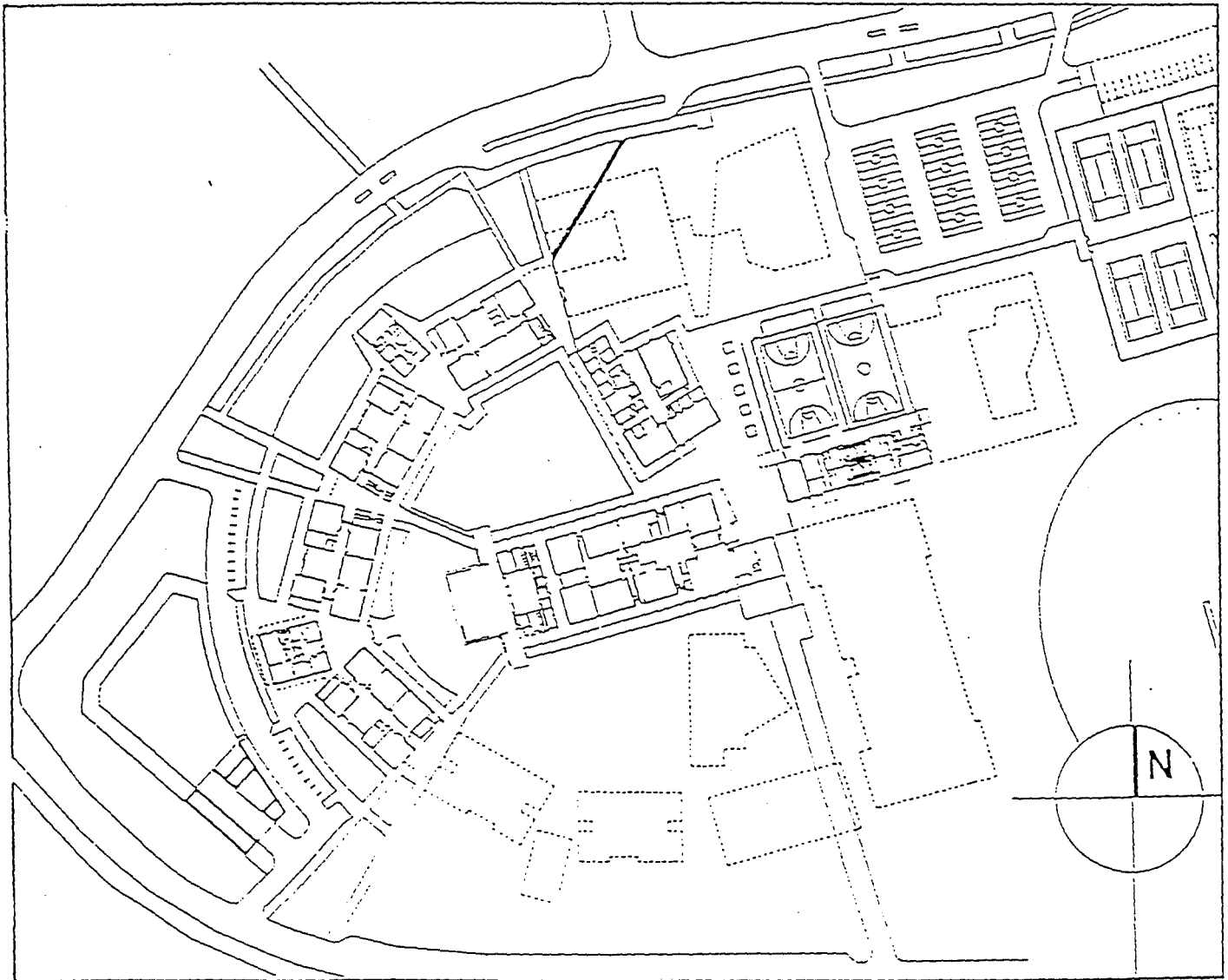
BALLAJURA COMMUNITY COLLEGE



SITE PLAN

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. GENERAL LEARNING CENTRE (Middle School) | 10. COVERED AREA COURTYARD |
| 2. COLLEGIATE CENTRE | 11. STREET (Community / School Interface) |
| 3. ART / CRAFT (Including Stage One Administration) | 12. FUTURE SENIOR SCHOOL COURTYARD |
| 4. GYMNASIUM | 13. FUTURE ADMINISTRATION |
| 5. COVERED AREA AND CANTEEN | 14. FUTURE PERFORMING ARTS |
| 6. SCIENCE (Including Stage One Technology) | 15. FUTURE COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTRE |
| 7. SERVICES COMPOUND | 16. FUTURE LIBRARY |
| 8. AGRICULTURE COMPOUND | 17. FUTURE TECHNOLOGY AND ENTERPRISE |
| 9. MIDDLE SCHOOL COURTYARD | 18. FUTURE SENIOR SCHOOL |

BALLAJURA COMMUNITY COLLEGE



FLOOR PLANS

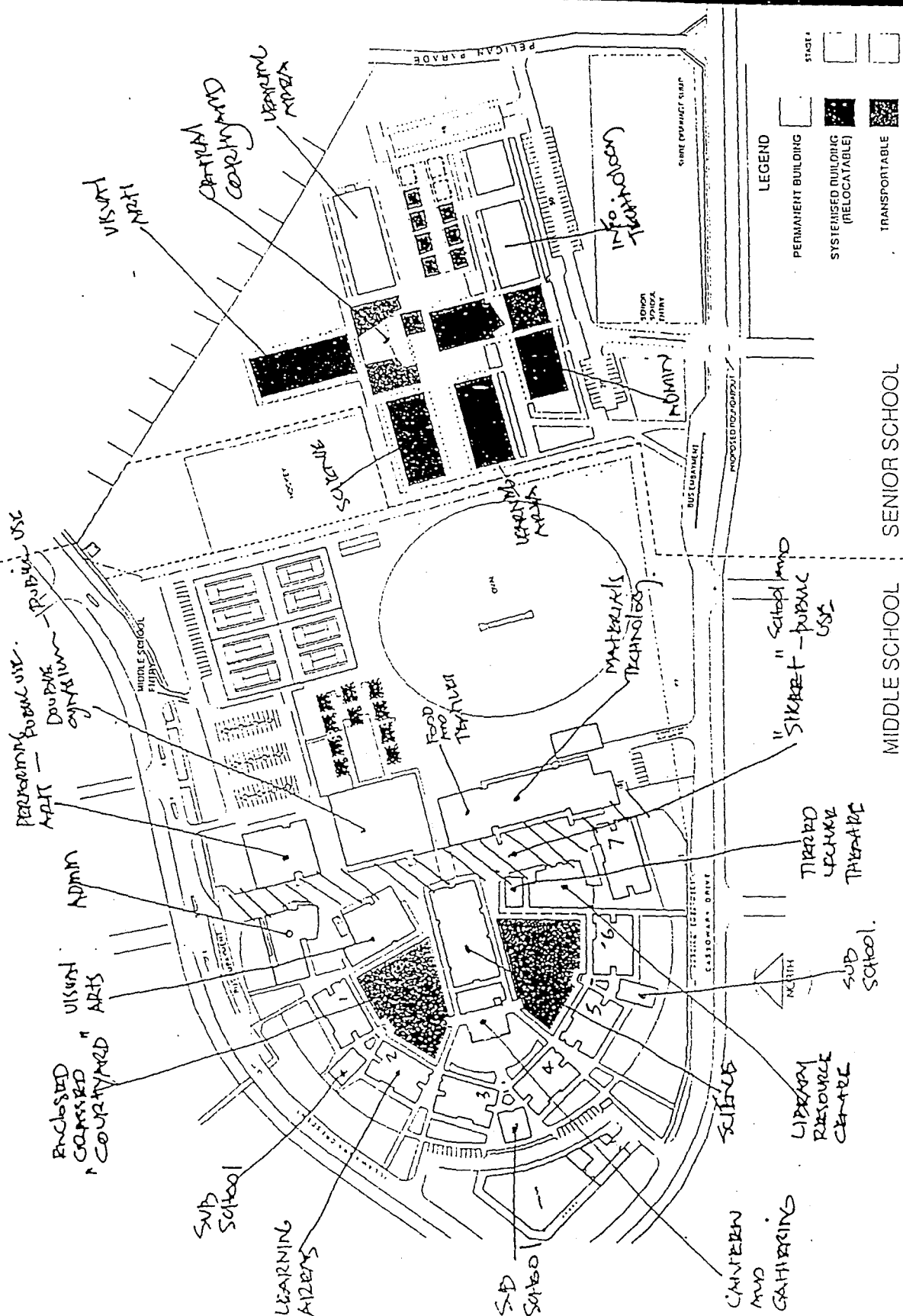
SITE PLAN

DONALDSON WARN

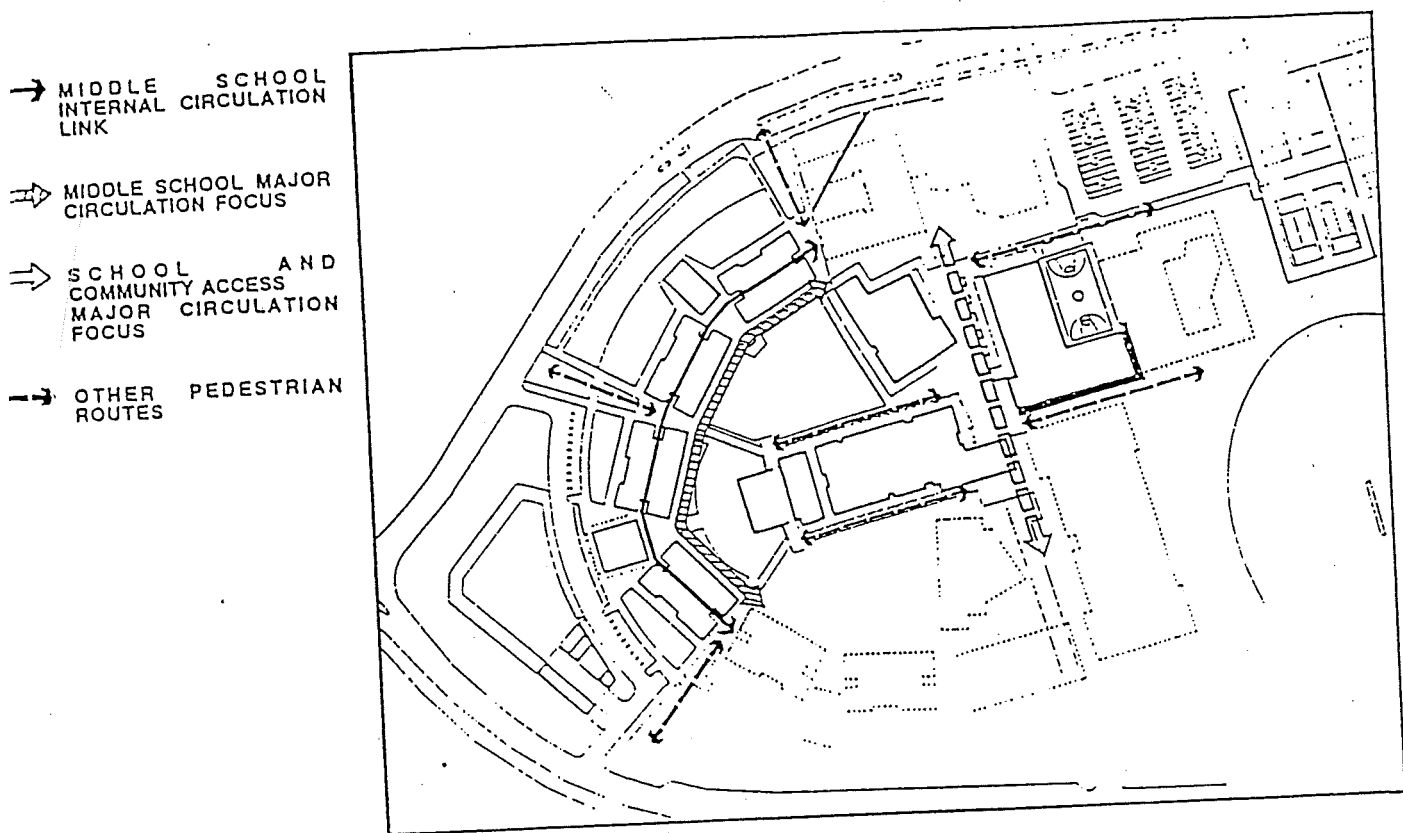
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**DEPARTMENT OF
CONTRACT AND
MANAGEMENT
SERVICES**

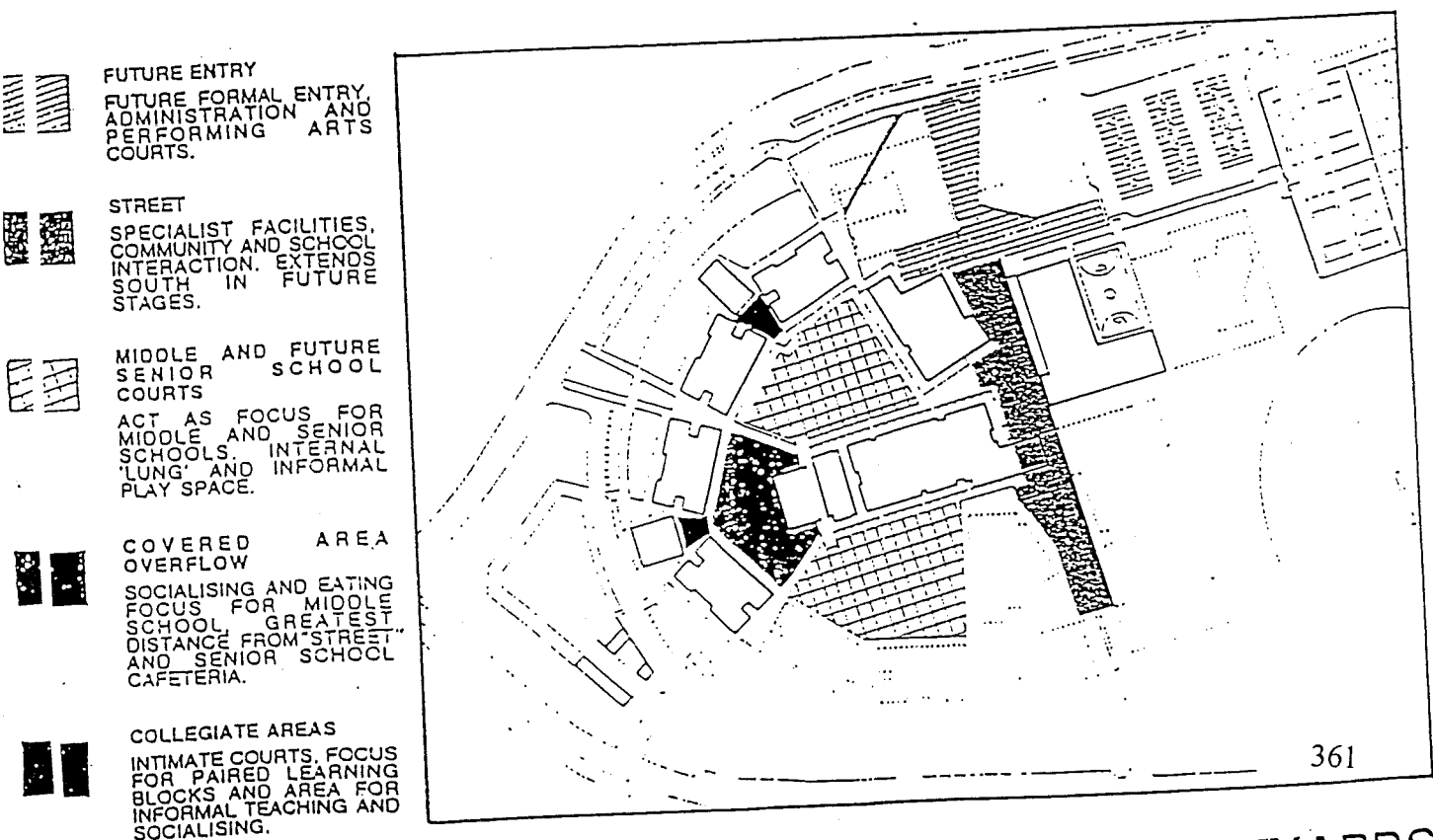
Lab. No. 1559
Dwg. No. 08101
Date 2 MAY 1977



BALLAJURA COMMUNITY COLLEGE



STAGE ONE CIRCULATION



my career

Colin Bell
President of the P&C and
chairman of the School Council



MORE value should be put on the role and benefits of voluntary, or unpaid, work in the community.

At Ballajura Community College we are fortunate to have people, both old and young, who offer their time to support the school for no other reason than to be part of something which is so pivotal to better preparing our students for the future.

We also have students who go the extra distance to support the school and this is great to see.

I have two roles at the school: president of the P&C and chairman of the School Council.

I've been president of the P&C since 1996. This has involved working with a group of dedicated parents and friends of BCC to support teachers in their pursuit of providing first class learning opportunities for students and participating in the planning process of the school.

The P&C is also heavily involved in fundraising and runs a series of businesses in the school including the Middle School Canteen, Senior School Cafe, the Uniform Shop and the bookists and bookshop at the beginning of each year.

The School Council's role is to set policy for the school; endorse the school's annual plan and areas of focus; support the principal and the school administration and leadership team in their roles; and champion the school in forums and offer non-teaching leadership at school events and activities.

In a practical sense BCC has operated essentially like a self-managed school since its inception with significant parent and community involvement. I think we can be very proud of what we have achieved in the first 4 1/2 years.

My wife and I have been active in my two sons' previous schools through the P&Cs as well as previous involvement in school councils.

I became involved in this capacity because I wanted to stay in touch with education while my sons went through school and was keen to do my bit to help the local school. I have national roles which have ties to Enterprise Education and Vocational Education in schools.

For this type of role you need to care about people, particularly the young, be able to facilitate planning and strategic thinking, build teamwork, know how to get things done (have good networks), know how the system works, plus the normal stuff like run meetings and setting agendas.

I don't get paid for this work. I do it for the pleasure of making things happen.

I have now wound back my involvement in the local community because my business involves fairly constant travel out of the State. I work as a consultant for various companies in the role of change management, project management and organisational change.

I'm currently a committee member of the Malaga Business Enterprise Centre and a member of the Malaga Business Association.

It is important to sustain links to the community because schools can no longer operate in isolation to meet the needs of the community. Since its inception BCC has embraced the imperative of community consultation and hence its name.

At BCC we see a number of segments of the community which need to be connected to the activities of the school. The parents and the householders of Ballajura and Alexander Heights have been pivotal in setting the ethos and the curriculum of the school.

As the student population has got older, the business community has become a vital link to the school, providing students with vocational experiences and work placements.

We are fortunate to enjoy a very good relationship with the Malaga BEC and the Malaga Business Association and we appreciate the support of the local businesses.



By Lesley Street and Melanie Hindley,
Ballajura Community College

BALLAJURA COMMUNITY COLLEGE is a State Government school, innovative both in its structure and operation. We welcome the community's contribution to various planning, recreational, educational, sporting and cultural aspects of the school.

Buildings have been planned over four stages to deal with a peak enrolment of about 2200 students. To be able to manage such big numbers and to adequately provide facilities for a wide range of student ages and interests, we have two campuses on the school site. The middle school caters for students from Years 7 to 9. The senior campus houses students from Years 10 to 12. Our vision is to provide an innovative, flexible, responsive program which builds on the benefits of the middle school model and at the same time recognises the unique and different needs of students in Years 11 and 12. In keeping with its name, Ballajura Community College maintains strong links with the community at all levels, from local to global.

Staff are selected on merit. The school advertises and hand picks its own staff. All team members are strongly committed to the school ethos:

- The maintenance of a flexible, caring and supportive learning environment through whole-school collaboration.

- Participative decision-making involving students, staff, parents and the community.

- The principles of developmental learning.

- Encouraging students to become successful learners.

- An integrated students-centred approach to teaching and learning.

- Being responsible and accountable members of the school community.

- Maintaining a healthy and safe environment.

- Reflective practices and whole-of-life learning.

- Promoting mutual respect, trust and recognition of individual worth.



The technology room at Ballajura Community College draws interest from Year 7 students Danielle van Dosten, left, Kelly Davis and Krista Radford.

A sense of community



Some of the masks made by Ballajura Community College students on display in their art department.

Learning beyond the classroom

THE philosophy of Ballajura Community College is grounded in the concept of community. Our goal is to ensure that students experience a gradual transition from a small supportive community through to a more diverse structure, which ultimately allows them to take their place as responsible and responsive citizens of the future.

In Years 7 and 8, students belong to small communities each containing 10 class groups. Education support classes are integrated into this model. These communities are called Teams. For most of the school day, students remain within their class group with their homeroom teacher, fostering a strong sense of belonging and community spirit.

To ensure a smooth transition from middle to senior campus and to provide students with an

increasing degree of specialisation, Year 9 students experience a slightly broader sense of community. While remaining within the team structure, the program is modified to include a base of two teachers who work collaboratively to ensure a relevant and integrated curriculum. This encourages our learners to look beyond their immediate classroom and develop a sense of community with other school members. Our senior campus is grounded in the principles and ethos of adult learning. This encourages students to look still further and develop a sense of membership with, and responsibility to, the wider community.

The senior campus operates on a flexible timetable to maximise our use of resources and to provide optimum learning opportunities for our students. Both the structure of the day and the buildings themselves provide

students with a very real taste of what post-compulsory studies at TAFE or university might be like. Each student is placed on an individual work program that reflects the needs, skills and goals of each learner. This is developed in close consultation with the student, parents and teachers. Structured workplace learning is an integral part of many students' educational programs.

Our curriculum and ethos are tailored to develop competencies valued by the community. At Ballajura Community College we are committed to the maintenance of a flexible, caring and supportive learning environment through whole-school collaboration. Decision-making is participative and involves students, staff, parents and the community. The principles of developmental learning are embedded within all facets of the

curriculum. As a result, our school has adopted an integrated students-centred approach to teaching and learning. Our aim is to develop a school where all individuals become responsible and accountable members of the school and the wider community.

The college has embraced the curriculum framework and reports annually in outcome statements across all learning areas. Teams plan integrated modules that are both relevant and directly related to the development of an integrated, meaningful body of work. Modules such as My Heritage, Campaign Earth and Challenges and Choices encourage students to develop increasing awareness beyond the immediate to issues relevant to the global community.

These achievements in curriculum design and the use of outcome statements have been recognised and valued by the educational community. As a direct result, more than 60 educators have visited our school this year alone. They have come from Europe, Asia and the eastern States and throughout WA and represent both government and non-government educational sectors. Additionally, staff members have been invited to speak on these issues at more than a dozen schools and education forums as far afield as Kalgoorlie-Boulder, Port Hedland and Christmas Island.

Further to this, many government schools now recognise the benefits of middle schooling in relation to learning and developmental outcomes for their students. Many schools have used Ballajura Community College as a model of best practice when developing their own middle school programs.

We are pleased to have the opportunity to share our knowledge and expertise with others in the education community.

Strong support in local links

HISTORICALLY, our school has had strong commitment from the local community and this support continues today. Ballajura Community College is an integral part of the community it serves. Both the P&C and School Council serve as forums for parents, enterprise and community members to be involved at all levels of decision-making concerning the school and its students.

The college maintains strong links with the Malaga Business Association. Our school recently hosted an evening for members of the association to show the state of the art technology and facilities it has available. The skills of our students were also highlighted through demonstration of the use of technology and the quality catering provided by hospitality students. Senior campus students are now designing Web pages for local businesses as a part of a reciprocal consultancy arrangement.

There are 45 members of the Police Rangers at our school involving students from Years 8 to 12. Teacher Ray Roberts heads this group as unit coordinator. A recent camp brought enthusiastic responses from parent helpers who happily gave up their weekend to support the rangers in challenging activities such as climbing and abseiling. Last Sunday, rangers took part in Walk for the Cure to raise money for the Juvenile Diabetes Association.

Seniors pass on their values

1999 is the Year of Older Persons. In April, Ballajura Community College hosted the launch of the schools component of the Universal Design Competition. Education Minister Colin Barnett with Seniors Minister Rhonda Parker used our tiered lecture theatre to address senior volunteers, community leaders, parents, staff and students from several government and non-government schools. The event was organised and catered for by senior campus student councillors. School captains Zahar Edries and Erin Reed excelled in their role as masters of ceremonies. Prime Minister John Howard also used the venue

last year to deliver his new policy on crime. Our school volunteer program is highly successful. Senior members of the local community provide one-to-one support for students with reading difficulties. The students involved develop a special bond with their volunteer. Apart from gaining important literacy skills, they also gain valuable insights into the contribution that older people make to our community.

At the other end of the scale Year 9 students read picture books they had written and illustrated to students in Years 1 and 3 at Illawarra Primary School. Events such as these provide relevance and an authentic audience for our English program. Primary school students also gain an insight into life in secondary school and build confidence in older students in their community.

Illawarra Primary School is also host to our Sportsfun students. These students are members of the Year 9 FLAME physical education extension program. Students are supported in the development of sports programs for primary aged students. Concepts such as team building, skills and leadership are included in a complete program delivered by FLAME students to classes within the primary school under supervision of their teacher.

Caring net reaches wide

AT Ballajura Community College we are proud of the way our students become actively involved in supporting areas of need in our local, national and global community. Collectively, they share a very real sense of responsibility toward the world in which they live.

Year 12 student Karina Noble worked closely with our school chaplain David Dix to organise a sleepover at the school to raise funds for the 40 Hour Famine Appeal. The results were outstanding, the college raising more than \$6000, the biggest amount raised from any school in WA. Out of more than 1800 schools, we topped the list to become the biggest fundraiser of any government school in the country.

Members of the "10 Plus" program have recently returned from planting thousands of trees in our South-West. This was done in collaboration with the Men of the Trees group. Earlier in the year they also planted 2000 trees for the Jarrahdale

Heritage Society in association with CALM. "10 Plus" is a program for Year 1 students who need support to further develop their literacy and numeracy skill. The strong commitment our students have to conservation and environmental issues is ongoing. Students were also involved in this valuable project last year. Thus, the school is establishing links with the wider community so that students develop a proactive approach to environmental challenges.

Our highly successful talent show provides a wonderful forum for students. This year, Year 11 small business manager and enterprise students have expertly managed the show, learning valuable entrepreneurial and enterprise skills. The show held during lunchtime and is very popular with students. There is an audience entrance fee which is donated to Princess Margaret Hospital each year. This year we raised more than \$1500 to go towards the care of sick children in our community. The Year 11 small business team has started a to drive at the school so that it can present toys and a cash donation at the same time

Posters spread the message

YEAR 12 art and design students have been working with their teacher Bev Day to design posters which carry important community health and environment messages. Samples were sent to organisations such as the WA Health Department and Greenpeace. Student Natasha Sandei received a letter of thanks from Greenpeace, which felt her work was "fabulous". Greenpeace has requested permission to put a colour copy of the design or their soon-to-be-launched kid's Web site. Damian Hughes' poster will be kept on file by the Health Department's smoking and health program and may be used as part of a future strategy.

Although our school band is in only its inaugural year, it has fast become an integral part of celebrations within the school community. On August 20 this was taken a step further at the WA Schools Concert Band Festival at Perth College. Our band was entered in the novice section and performed outstandingly under the guidance of music teacher Stuart Rhine-Davis. As a result, they were awarded seven excellent ratings and one good rating out of the total eight judging criteria.

PICTURES: MICHAEL HEDDEN



Relaxing new facilities at Ballajura Community College are a big attraction for students.

Both the structure of the day and the buildings themselves provide students with a very real taste of what post-compulsory studies at TAFE or university might be like.